

Table of international exchange rates for various currencies including the Dollar, Pound, and others.

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Michael Crichton: reading the future
Mystic Mike

Harold Pinter...

Society

Rush-hour terror in Paris

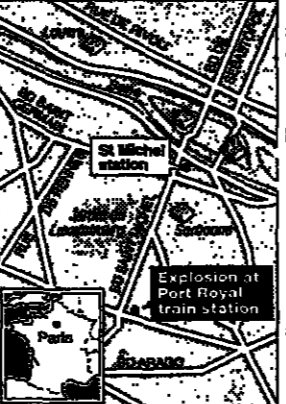


Rescue personnel evacuate the injured after yesterday evening's bombing of a rush-hour train in central Paris

Bombers bring death and chaos

Troops on alert in French cities

Paul Webster and Alex Duval Smith in Paris
THOUSANDS of police and troops were on alert in city centres throughout France last night after a rush-hour bomb killed two people and injured more than 20 on an express urban rail line in Paris.



orders of the Algerian Armed Islamic Group.
If Algerian extremists were responsible for last night's blast, they could have been protesting against a presidential referendum held by the Algerian government at the weekend.

Angry EU isolates Britain

Treaty reveals new conflict

John Palmer in Brussels

A NEW draft European Union Treaty to be sent to John Major and other EU leaders tomorrow in advance of next week-end's Dublin summit, reveals the extent to which the British government has already lost the political battle over the future shape and evolution of the EU.



The timing of the Dublin summit, not long before the election, will make it almost impossible to prevent bruising exchanges between Mr Major and the other leaders.
The Dutch government, which takes over the EU presidency from Ireland at the end of December, has said it will be the first to make a new agreement with London.

Star Wars scientists find water in crater on the Moon

Tim Radford on an American discovery expected to trigger a new explosion of interest in Earth's nearest neighbour

UNITED STATES Star Wars scientists yesterday announced that they had found water on the Moon. They identified it in a deep crater near the lunar south pole, where the sun's rays could never melt it.

years ago. The Pentagon — the headquarters of the US defence machine and the "godparent" of the military-inspired Clementine project — revealed "a formation the size of a small lake" in a giant crater.

minerals and water at the Moon's poles.
In the meantime, the Pentagon's Ballistic Missile Defence Organisation had put up a cat-price space probe called Clementine, designed to test missile-tracking systems for Ronald Reagan's notorious Star Wars programme.

Poverty is when you can't afford 50p



Imagine what life is like for many children living in the poorest parts of the world. Never to have eaten a decent meal, never to have drunk clean water and never to have had proper medical care.

Inside

Britain
The finances of the man accused of death in a road rage attack, appealed for the attacker's friends to go to the police.

World News
Burmese authorities blamed agitators for an all-night protest which led to police intervention and hundreds of students being detained.

Finance
A secret plan to demerge BHP, the Johnsons-to-financial services group, has collapsed just days before it was to have been finalised.

Sport
Tim Henman's late swing started £150,000 as he beat Germany's Michael Schenker 6-3 in the first round of the Grand Slam cup.

Comment and Letters to
Obituaries to
Crossword 16, Weather 16, Radio and TV 16



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Handwritten signature or note at the bottom of the page.

Sketch

Trick answer to a straight question



Simon Hoggart

TRICK questions come thick and fast in Parliament; what we had yesterday was a trick answer. Tony Blair started with his usual mild first question. This is supposed to establish what a reasonable fellow he is, how he is asking only in a spirit of genuine inquiry, and to provide the excuse for his next two questions turning into a mad, frothing rant.

forward answer to a straightforward question was Pitt the Younger in 1806, though he was on his deathbed, so that didn't count as a first-class match. Meanwhile, can I say how much I am enjoying this delicious fruit cake kindly sent in by Mrs Ewa Fabricant of Rotterdam?

Cabinet Europhiles unite behind keeping options open □ Sceptics fight on against single currency

Major backs Clarke on EMU

TORY Euro-sceptics last night vowed to fight on in their campaign against the single European currency after John Major decisively aligned himself with the Cabinet's Europhile heavyweights, Kenneth Clarke and Michael Heseltine, in keeping British options open.

After days of renewed speculation that the Prime Minister may be edging towards openly saying "no" to British membership of the planned euro throughout the 1997-2002 period, Mr Major nattered the rumours under pressure from Tony Blair at question time in the Commons.

Mr Major replied: "That remains unequivocally the position of the Government" — an unusually crisp and unambiguous answer. Mr Blair then urged him to "tidy up one small loose end" by endorsing remarks by Mr Heseltine on Radio 4's The World at One that "we are not going to change our position in the election campaign or in this parliament".

Though officials denied it, the exercise looked to have been co-ordinated at the Cabinet's morning strategy committee, which was chaired by Mr Heseltine.

One sceptic privately countered: "The Cabinet are always teetering on the brink of changing the policy. This will go on." The Europhile Tory MP Quentin Davies derided such talk. "They will just have to dream on," he said.

that when Mr Major said there would be no policy change "in this parliament" he left open the option to make a switch during the election campaign — after Parliament is dissolved.

Review

Frayed farce that fails to catch fire

Michael Billington

I know there was always a stereotype battleaxe in the Aldwych farces, but the joke in this case wears thin: the moral seems to be that you can get away with theft, and even an accidental killing, as long as you are well-bred old school chums and your victims are a predatory servant and her blackmailing brother.

Time, in short, has not been kind to the play. That it survives at all is largely due to the genuine charm of Rhys Jones who, as D'Arcy Tuck, gives the impression of a hapless innocent caught up in murky shenanigans. He is at his best in the largely silent scene of the bedroom robbery where he douses himself with the victim's chloroform and sways like a pine tree caught in a hurricane. He displays the well-timed fluster of the born farceur.



Gwyn Jones... An independent assessment panel has declined to reappoint him as chairman of BBC Wales and a governor of S4C and the BBC

Nolan reforms oust quango man

Track record

WELSH Tory once tipped as a future chairman of the BBC has become the first victim of Lord Nolan's clampdown on "jobs for the boys". An independent panel has refused to re-appoint him as chairman of BBC Wales and a governor of both the Welsh language channel, S4C, and the BBC for the next five years.

Dr Gwyn Jones, aged 48, a flamboyant businessman, was given prominent quango posts by successive Welsh secretaries Peter Walker and David Hunt. His present part-time job at the BBC is worth £21,000 for a two-day week — a £15,000 salary plus £5,000 in benefits. His part-time post as a governor at S4C is worth up to another £13,000.

Dr Jones followed a period of controversy when he was appointed by Lord Walker as chairman of the Welsh Development Agency at a salary of £42,000 for a two day week. The agency has a budget of over £150 million to attract industry to Wales.

The decision to drop Dr Jones follows a period of controversy when he was appointed by Lord Walker as chairman of the Welsh Development Agency at a salary of £42,000 for a two day week. The agency has a budget of over £150 million to attract industry to Wales.

Lord Nolan is to be congratulated in providing the opportunity to end this 'jobs for the boys' system."

Row as tunnel trains resume service

Week Chaudhary and Rebecca Smithers

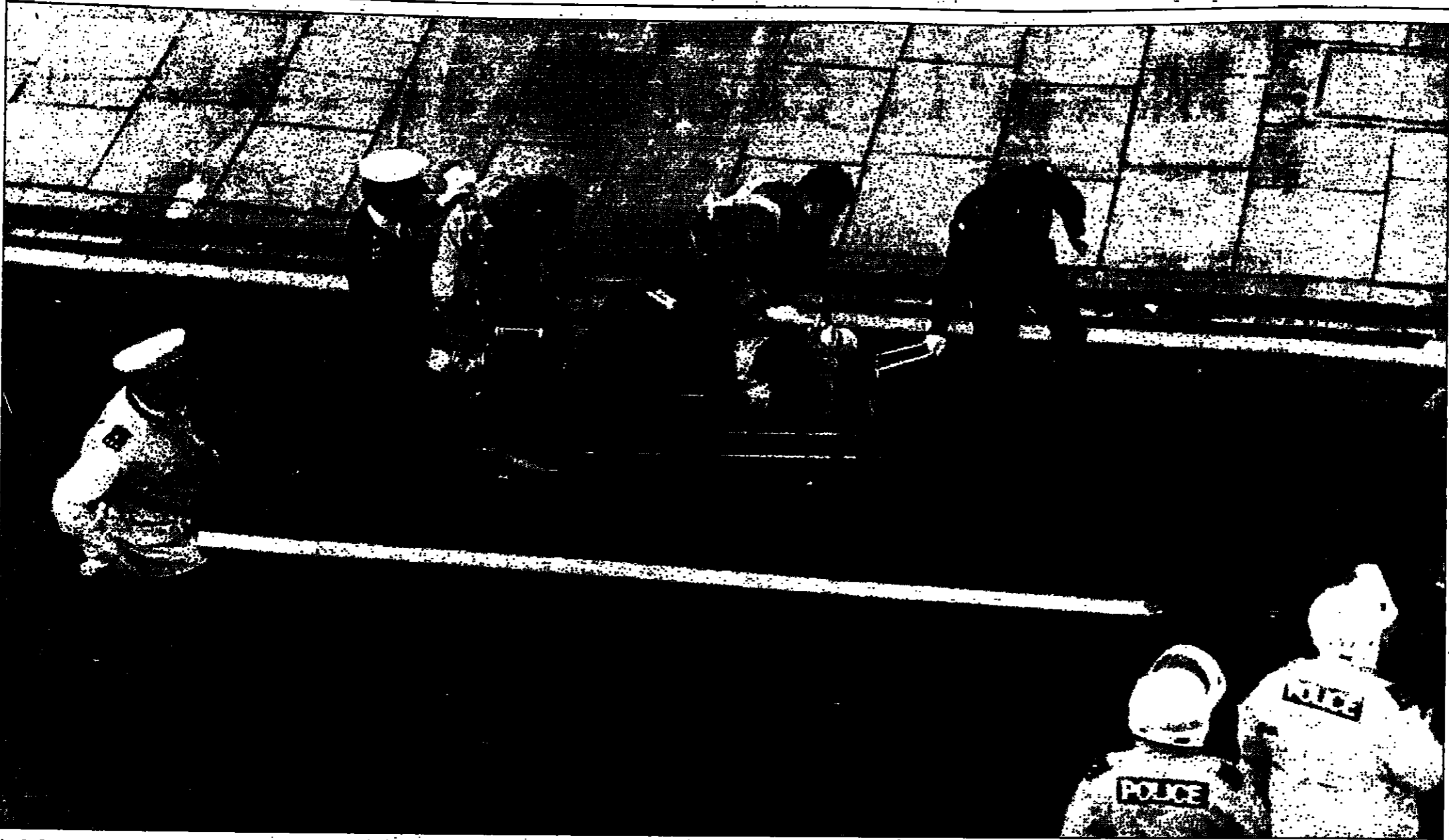
EUROTUNNEL was last night accused of putting profits before safety in the run-up to Christmas after it announced that passenger services through the Channel tunnel are to resume today.

The decision, 15 days after a fire broke out in the tunnel, was taken after a meeting of the tunnel's safety authority yesterday. A spokesman for the authority said it had advised the overall tunnel body, the Anglo-French Intergovernmental Commission, that services should resume.

Repair work on the part of the tunnel damaged by fire, which is expected to last between three to four months, is to continue while passenger services are running. Eurostar plans to resume running 13 out of its normal 14 return trips to Paris and seven of its normal eight round trips to Brussels, but freight shuttle services are not expected to resume for some time.

Advertisement for Abbey National Direct insurance, featuring the text 'Dig your home contents policy out of the drawer...' and the Abbey National logo.

صكنا من الامل



Ambulance crew wheel a wounded David Ewin away from the street in Barnes, south-west London, where police found him and a stolen car. He received gunshot wounds to the arm and stomach

Water firm cuts half its staff

Seumas Milne
Labour Editor

SOUTHERN Water, a privatised utility, will announce this morning it is jettisoning half its workforce — 2,000 out of 3,900 people — in a cost-cutting drive prompted by its takeover by Scottish Power this summer.

The scale of the upheaval, which also involves selling most of the company's subsidiaries, is far greater than expected. Employees had been led to believe at the time of the takeover that severe job cuts could be avoided.

Labour's employment spokesman Ian McCartney described the scale of Southern's move as scandalous. It was yet another example of the "fatcat utility bosses producing boom in the boardroom and bust for the workforce, while the taxpayer picks up the bill. Assurances given to regulator, customers and workforces have proved to be worthless.

A spokesman for the firm confirmed last night that just over half the workforce is to go over the next two years, but added that it was hoped redundancies would be voluntary and many of those working for subsidiaries would be employed by the new owners.

Southern Water, which was bought by Scottish Power for £1.7 billion, increased profits this year by 15 per cent to £166 million and analysts expect Scottish Power's earnings to increase by up to 40 per cent. But today's job cutting is bound to be seen as a recognition that Scottish Power paid over the odds for the utility.

Three quarters of Southern's 20 "non-core" subsidiaries — which employ 1,000 people across a wide range of businesses from IT Southern, an information technology consultancy, to Topmark, a vehicle hire firm — are to be sold.

Around 700 jobs will be shed from the company's core business and another 300 are in areas which will be "outsourced". A company spokesman said compulsory redundancies in the core business could not be ruled out.

Staff were briefed yesterday by Southern managers and talks will continue today with the trade unions. It is understood that the minimum redundancy payout will be £3,000. A Union official said it would seek guarantees of no compulsory redundancies, protection for those who remained and the maintenance of proper services.

Total boardroom remuneration at Scottish Power this year was £1.7 million, with the highest paid director — chief executive Ian Robinson — earning £285,000. A bonus scheme which will boost directors' salaries by up to 50 per cent.

Lucas Job cuts, page 11

Armed PC accused of murder

Suspect car thief shot as he made futile escape bid

Duncan Campbell
Crime Correspondent

A POLICEMAN who shot an unarmed suspected car thief as he frantically tried to escape yesterday went before a jury accused of murder.

Patrick Hodgson, a constable aged 43, said he shot the suspect twice because he feared for the safety of himself and the public. He denies the charge.

David Ewin was shot from the front passenger side as he revved the car, making the wheels spin, the Old Bailey heard.

Crown counsel John Bevan said that after the shooting Hodgson kept repeating: "Why didn't he do as he was told? I had no choice ... It tends to suggest that Ewin

was shot because he didn't do as he was told. That is not the law."

Hodgson was the map-reader in an armed response vehicle patrolling west London on February 28 last year. Another officer in the car, PC Patrick Kelly, had jotted down the number of a stolen Toyota after a message on the police radio. By chance, they spotted the car parked outside a shop in Barnes, south-west London.

As they approached the car, a man ran out of the shop. "A normal midday Tuesday busy street scene was suddenly transformed," Mr Bevan said. Within minutes, Ewin, aged 38, lay wounded in the arm and stomach. He died in hospital on March 16.

Mr Bevan said Ewin saw the police car from the shop. Ewin said "Oh, no!" and ran out to the car.



David Ewin: was behaving 'like a maniac'

Witnesses gave confusing accounts of what happened, Mr Bevan said, but it was established that PC Kelly took a passenger, Charles Macrae, out of the stolen car and had him under arrest.

PC Kelly was surprised to see Hodgson draw his 9mm Glock handgun as he did not think the situation merited an armed response.

Hodgson grabbed Ewin by the shirt through the open driver's window but Ewin shunted the car backwards and forwards. Hodgson was

in danger of being crushed between the Toyota and the police car, the court heard. He tried to smash the windscreen with the butt of his gun.

A van driver positioned his vehicle to block Ewin's escape and Hodgson went round to the passenger's side of the car, the court heard.

He shouted "armed police" but Ewin was behaving "like a maniac", revving the engine and making the wheels spin. Hodgson fired two shots either through the open passenger door or window, the court said. "You bastard, you've shot me in the stomach," and collapsed.

As other police arrived, Hodgson told them: "He's been shot. I had no choice. I had no choice." He asked about Ewin's condition.

Later, he made a statement in which he claimed that he feared for his life and had to make a split-second decision. "He did not seem to have any regard for anyone else. I feared for my own life and members of the public," he said of Ewin.

Mr Bevan told the court that Hodgson had many choices apart from shooting. At the time he opened fire, he was no longer in danger. Ewin was boxed in, his hands were on the wheel and he was

unarmed. The only danger was to the bodywork of the vehicles boxing the car in. Hodgson should not have drawn his gun in the first place, the court was told. The sight of the gun may have contributed to the panicky reaction of Ewin, who was found to have heroin, cocaine and cannabis in his blood. He had also consumed 1 1/2 times the legal limit of alcohol.

Peter Core, a bus passenger who witnessed the incident, told the court that Hodgson was lucky to have escaped injury by being trapped between vehicles. "I was completely and utterly shocked," Mr Core said. "I'd never seen anything like it ... He fired twice in less than half a second — crack, crack." Hodgson had then dragged the driver on to the road.

Russell Johnson, a teacher who was cycling past, said: "When the car stopped there was an awful silence. Nothing happened for a couple of seconds. The policeman approached the car and shot the driver."

The court heard that armed response officers were highly trained and there were strict rules governing the circumstances in which they could use firearms. The case continues.



Patrick Hodgson: 'I feared for my life' PHOTOGRAPH: JEFF MOORE

'Pravda' swaps sides to lambast Birt

Andrew Culf
Media Correspondent

THE BBC's house newspaper, Ariel, referred to by staff as Pravda for its unwavering loyalty to director general John Birt's regime, underwent a dose of glasnost yesterday.

For one week editorial control was handed over to seven volunteers from rank-and-file employees. It was a brave move by the BBC's Orwellian-sounding Corporate Internal Communication department: last month a union survey revealed that more than 97 per cent of staff were unhappy with the way the BBC was being run.

Yesterday's edition of the newspaper devoted its cover to a specially commissioned John Birt triptych from the hard-hitting cartoonist Ralph Steadman in the style of his series of "paranoid" caricatures.

Ariel's usual diet of recycled BBC press releases and internal announcements made way for pages of satire at the expense of Mr Birt and his restructuring.

There was an explanatory note from acting editor Daniel Jones, who works for BBC Wales, in the form of a Birt-style "mission



Ralph Steadman's John Birt triptych commissioned for the cover of BBC staff's 'Ariel Ultra'

statement". He said the seven members of staff selected by Ariel's full-time editor, Robin Reynolds, had one thing in common: "Few of us read Ariel, few felt it was particularly relevant, and it was anything other than a management organ."

They claimed the newspaper should be "trustworthy, informative, entertaining, educative, participative, provocative and robust". None of these adjectives is routinely applied to Ariel.

Mr Jones added, in a masterly impression of Birt-speak: "Ariel should be a powerful disseminator of

information, top down and bottom up it should reflect all aspects of an increasingly diversified BBC."

The team — which said it had been deliberately provocative — commissioned an article from Feedback presenter Christopher Drinkley, who criticised senior BBC staff for "bassy-foot accountability" and a lack of confidence.

The newspaper, renamed Ariel Ultra, contained attacks on bureaucracy and barbs at the expense of executives Alan Yentob, Michael Jackson and Mark Thompson.

A BBC spokeswoman denied that the exercise had

backfired. The corporation might repeat it if feedback was favourable. She said: "It reflects the BBC's commitment to openness. It has given Ariel a fresh perspective and turned out very well."

Mr Birt's view on how well the exercise had turned out was not immediately available.

One of the editorial team said: "It has caused a real stir, although lots of people have come up and said it is fantastic."

"We tried to reflect honest and robust opinion as opposed to bland press releases. None of us has received a P45 — yet."

Passengers in transit this week will have been thrilled to find a new hardcover Michael Crichton title on the shelves. They will soon discover, though, that the former traveller's friend has produced the worst of all texts with which to settle down on a 747.

G2 cover story

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Turn in the killer, begs road rage girlfriend

Plea to driver in 'cat and mouse' chase that led to fatal stabbing

Sarah Boseley

THE FLANCEE of the man knifed to death on Sunday in a road rage attack, yesterday appealed for the attacker's friends to go to the police.

At an emotional press conference where Tracey Andrews was comforted by the parents of her fiancé, Lee Harvey, she called the attack "the most stupid, vile thing that could come out of just a car chase".

She told how Mr Harvey, aged 25, had participated in a game of cat and mouse with the battered, F-registered Ford Sierra that pursued their car, headlights flashing. The couple had overtaken the Sierra on the A38 in Bromsgrove, near Birmingham, on their way home from a quiet evening in the pub with friends on Sunday.

"We were just followed and chased along the lanes. It was the case of both Lee and the other person playing cat-and-mouse with each other for a while, and then they overtook us. Lee decided to pull in and got out of the car," said the 27-year-old bar maid.

"There was some sort of argument going on, just stupid like just calling each other names and a lot of swearing going on."

The Sierra driver, who had exchanged insults with Mr Harvey, got back into his car. Then the front seat passenger got out and stabbed Mr Harvey in the neck, face and body more than 15 times, leaving him to die in the arms of his girlfriend, whom he had also cut and punched to the ground.

Ms Andrews, who had stitches above her eyebrow and two black eyes from the attack, said: "The driver walked off. It was nothing to do with the driver. I want to say: Will the driver of the car come forward, because you are not to blame for this, and I know that because you walked away."

"But you obviously knew him. He has ruined my life and he has ruined the life of Lee's parents. It was not your fault. Please come forward. And if anybody else can remember seeing us, please

just come forward. Any little thing could help."

Ms Andrews said that when she saw her fiancé slump to the ground, she did not realise he had been stabbed. "I saw the man hit Lee. I got out of the car, because I am not the sort of person to sit there. I came round the back of the car and Lee was on the floor."

"I thought he had been hit and then I went over to the man. We had a confrontation and he hit me. When I got up he was walking back to the car. Lee was lying on the floor. I didn't realise how bad it was because it was so dark. I just went into shock. I didn't know what to do."

She thought Mr Harvey had been speeding through the country lanes, with the other car on his tail, at about 60mph — "that is really fast down a country lane."

"I was shouting at Lee to slow down and to ignore him and stop the car. I don't know if a lot of men are like him but when you get behind the wheel of a car sometimes you change personality. He doesn't like anybody telling him how to drive anyway."

"I cannot really say what caused them to follow us. The first I was aware of was when they were coming up close and flashing their lights at us. And then Lee was slowing down and then going fast as well."

Detective Superintendent Ian Johnston of West Mercia police, in charge of the murder investigation, said that in view of the attack on Mr Harvey, Ms Andrews was lucky not to have been more seriously hurt. The weapon was a sharp-bladed instrument, possibly a knife, but had not so far been found.

The couple, who each have a young daughter by a previous partner, had lived together in Alvechurch, near Bromsgrove, for two years. They were to marry next June. Ms Andrews described her fiancé as "a lovely, kind, generous, funny man".

The man who killed him, she said, "didn't seem normal. I can't say he seemed drunk, but he seemed to me he wasn't normal — as if he had taken something. It was just the way he looked. He had starey eyes."

Maureen Harvey, Lee's



Lee Harvey, stabbed in face and body more than 15 times

"I was shouting at Lee to slow down and to ignore him and stop the car. I don't know if a lot of men are like him but when you get behind the wheel of a car sometimes you change personality. He doesn't like anybody telling him how to drive anyway. I cannot really say what caused them to follow us."



Tracey Andrews, with injuries from the attack, at yesterday's press conference

PHOTOGRAPH: IAN HODGSON

Virgin unveils nuptial delights

Clare Longrigg

VIRGIN yesterday launched a one-stop wedding shop in Charing Cross, London, with an appearance from Richard Branson in drag as the bride of the future.

Mr Branson, in fuchsia lipstick, wore a cut-away shot silk bustle which revealed his legs in white fishnets, and a veil with Minnie Mouse bow. He had shaved off his beard for the occasion.

The idea for a wedding department store, selling everything from the frock to the cake decorations, came from a former air stewardess, Ailsa Fatchey, after she organised a wedding for a friend. "I found it completely exhausting. It was a nightmare," said Ms Fatchey, now general manager of Virgin Bride. "The excitement has gone from the bridal industry."

Virgin's interest is also likely to have been kindled by the honeymoon business. The store will have the first interactive booking system, with a face-to-face video link with travel reps. Virgin will take priority over other airlines when couples are booking a honeymoon.

The store, Virgin Bride, hopes to attract couples who want an unconventional occasion. Highlight of a catwalk show yesterday, which featured some of the shop's vast range of wedding dresses, was a ballgown in black PVC.

The store has massage and beauty facilities as well as a catwalk and hair and make-up stylists. Unwitting visitors yesterday found themselves face down on massage chairs being treated to a shiatsu massage.

Ms Fatchey added: "The bride wants to feel special; she wants to be pampered. Thirty-eight per cent of the market are second marriages. A lot of the brides are older, professional women who want an informal, funky wedding and haven't got time to organise it themselves."

Mr Branson said he was looking forward to some very public wedding stunts. "You never know, the first Virgin Bride wedding could take place in a hot-air balloon at dawn."

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ment devastated family in the world. We need capital punishment back. We need the punishment to fit the crime. "This man has wiped away my son's life in an instant. He has ruined my life, Maureen's life, and Tracey's. My son loved his mother and his sister like I cannot begin to tell you. And me, I hope he loved me."

"I would like to appeal to the public out there to help. Somebody knows this man, somebody is shielding him."

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Right still hopes to change stance on euro before election, no matter how many times Major rules out shift

Sceptics turn screw on PM

Michael White
Political Editor

SURVEYING the wreckage of another day in the Commons wasted by Tory infighting over Europe the Labour MP, Roger Stott, last night cheerfully concluded: "There's definitely a familiar whiff of gangrene about it."

Thatcher. Demoralised and divided, living from day to day, and usually keener to fight each other than the resurgent Opposition, the Labour backbenches behaved as the Tories are increasingly behaving.

In 1978-9 Callaghan, like Major today, faced a pincer movement. The left was already planning for Opposition, internal party reforms that would open the leadership to Tony Benn who stayed in cabinet — like Mr Major's "bastards" — while signalling dissent through friends. Today John Redwood runs his own guerrilla campaign, unrestrained.

Booker Prize for fiction," Mr Major said yesterday. But they did not come out of thin air.

more electable if their EU stance was firmer. There is only one snag: Mr Clarke, whose prospects in the party currently look as dim as Sir Nicholas Scott's, would unquestionably resign rather than abandon a compromise so sensible that Gordon Brown backs it too.

think so," one loyal ex-cabinet minister stressed last night. The awkward fact is that, after 17 years in power and still facing intractable problems, the Tory right has got religion in an ideological sense familiar to the old Bennite left: conviction politics, Mrs Thatcher called them.

Lords leader fights Labour reform plans

Ewen MacAskill, Chief
Political Correspondent

LABOUR will brush aside a threat by Tory peers for reform of the Lords.

borne to back hereditary peers would be intellectually and electorally indefensible. Labour is committed to introducing a devolution bill for Scotland and Wales in its first year in government but has not decided on the timetable for Lords reform.



Kensington and Chelsea's chairman, Andrew Dalton, far left, and, clockwise from left, three MPs who may seek selection, Sir John Wheeler, Hartley Booth and Michael Stephen

MPs left homeless after shake-up set to join contest for Scott's seat

Rebecca Smithers
Political Correspondent

THE rush to replace Sir Nicholas Scott in one of the safest Conservative seats in the country will begin next week, when the 130-strong executive council of the Kensington and Chelsea constituency association will meet to discuss the timetable.

The plan is to have a new parliamentary candidate for the plum seat in place by the end of January. Former minister Sir Nicholas will remain as an MP until the election.

ker by Sir Nicholas before he was unceremoniously dumped by the party on Monday night.

months from the election. Northern Ireland minister Sir John Wheeler, MP for neighbouring North Westminster, is expected to throw his hat into the ring, as could fellow MPs Hartley Booth (Finchley) and Michael Stephen (Sharnham).

ing seat in Sussex. Also interested is the Eurosceptic Martin Howe QC, nephew of Sir Geoffrey, who would be an attractive candidate to those who thought Sir Nicholas "soft on Europe".

to 439 at the highly-charged meeting to oust the former minister, after he was dogged by a series of drink-related scandals.

Depleted Tories defeated on opt-out schools expansion

John Carvel
Education Editor

THE Government yesterday lost a key vote on its Education Bill when two Conservatives MPs went missing from the committee stage in the Commons, allowing Labour to defeat proposals for grant-maintained schools to expand by 50 per cent without asking official permission.

day with its regular majority of 98. But John Marshall, Conservative MP for Hendon South, got permission to leave just after midday to attend a charity event elsewhere in the Commons with Norma Major, the Prime Minister's wife. Anthony Coombs, the Government's committee whip, realised a Labour ambush was in prospect and went to look for him.

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Junta blames biggest demonstration in years on 'political infiltrators' as hundreds are questioned

Burma halts student march

Nicholas Cumming-Bruce
in Bangkok

BURMESE authorities are blaming political agitators for a noisy all-night protest march by university students which police dispersed at dawn yesterday, briefly detaining several hundred protesters.

The students began one of the biggest demonstrations for years at dusk on Monday by blocking a busy intersection in Rangoon. They aired mainly campus grievances, including demands for a student union.

But in the early hours of the morning, a crowd of at least 2,000 marched through the centre of the capital, singing the national anthem, shouting slogans critical of the ruling military junta and waving banners calling for freedom and human rights.

Heavily armed police halted the march at dawn. They bundled several hundred students into lorries, taking them to a disused race course for questioning. A senior military official said the authorities had treated the students "leniently and gently" and that most were sent back to their campuses after checks to confirm whether they were "real

students or infiltrators". Rumours that baton-wielding police had beaten up some demonstrators could not be confirmed.

But the demonstration was more overtly political than a smaller student outburst in October, making it uncertain whether the protesters were using campus grievances to stir up political agitation. The marchers made no mention of the opposition National League for Democracy or its leader, Aung San Suu Kyi. But the security forces acted to prevent the protest from widening by blocking access to her house yesterday.



Burmese students demonstrate in front of Rangoon University in the capital on Monday afternoon, before police quelled their protest at dawn yesterday

Japanese foster future gameboys

Jonathan Watts in Tokyo

THE international success of Japan's computer-game industry has produced a host of new colleges exclusively for aspiring game software developers.

The domestic market has also nurtured a generation of game enthusiasts. It is said that more people own and play computer games in Japan than anywhere else in the world.

La Quina's jailers toss away keys

Mexico's union boss is no angel, but nor are those who trumped up charges against him, writes Phil Gunson in Mexico City

THE slight, frail 75-year-old perched on a bed in the hospital wing of the Reclusorio Oriente prison is but a shadow of the man who once controlled a billion-dollar trade union empire and made Mexican presidents tremble.

Rivals in the STPRM tended to meet violent, unexplained deaths, while many oil union bosses — though not by most accounts, La Quina himself — led mafia lifestyles.

But rather than arrest him for a genuine crime the then president allegedly had his people concoct fake crimes, exploiting the Mexican judiciary's notorious unwillingness to challenge the executive.



Joaquín Hernández Gallicia: ill but still behind bars

released since he is not "socially re-adapted", adding that it "cannot take into account arguments of a political nature".

More people own and play computer games in Japan than anywhere else in the world

2.6 million yen (£13,700), and gives students the chance to develop their own games under expert supervision. Most go on to join software houses, or establish their own, supplying industry giants such as Nintendo, Sega, Sony and Matsushita.

Software companies offer game developers salaries starting at about 5 million yen, while top game designers now appear in the national tax administration agency's list of Japan's highest earners.

The case is certain to prompt fresh calls for reform a legal system which allows juries hearing civil law actions to award unlimited damages.

The collision between three cars on the approach road to Dallas/Fort Worth Airport in December 1993 appeared to be the result of bad driving; the first vehicle stopped suddenly, the second swerved to avoid it, and the driver of the third was not watching the road.

Weapons — including 200 UzI sub-machine-guns — were allegedly planted at the scene, and the body of a federal agent who had died in an un-

related incident three states away was used as evidence for a murder trial.

\$24.5m car crash award will bring calls to limit powers of juries

Ian Katz in New York

ANWAR SOLIMAN, the multimillionaire chief executive of a restaurant chain, hardly fits the stereotype of one whose life has been ruined by an egregious act of corporate negligence.

Yet a Texas jury awarded him and another passenger \$24.5 million (£15.5 million) last week for the injuries they suffered in a road accident. Of this, \$10 million was in punitive damages.

Lawyers for Mr Soliman and a business associate, Ralph Roberts, argued that American Airlines had been repeatedly warned that the roadside signs could be dan-

gerous, but had insisted on erecting them. Though Mr Soliman suffered from blurred vision and a reduced sense of smell and taste as a result of the brain and spinal injuries he received in the accident, he did not lose a week's pay and is now back at work.

The airline, which says it will appeal against the judgement, argued that the accident was caused by negligent driving. But Mr Soliman's lawyers produced documents showing that airport authorities were concerned that the signs could cause accidents.

News in brief

Russia's miners strike over pay

SIBERIAN miners whose mass protests helped bring Boris Yeltsin to power went on strike again yesterday — this time in an action which threatens to bring down his government.

Spain's coup leader freed

THE civil guard colonel who led a coup attempt against Spain's fledgling democracy by storming the lower house of parliament in 1981 left prison on parole yesterday.

Military chiefs discuss Aids

ABOUT 200 Latin American military officers met on Monday to discuss the prevention and treatment of Aids and the disease's impact on the armed forces.

Brad tries for Miss Australia

THE Miss Australia contest has its first male finalist: Brad Rodgers, who won the Victoria state qualifying competition on Monday night.

Aphrodisiac gum seized

SAUDI ARABIA has seized banned chewing gum and drops which are claimed to improve male sexual performance, a Saudi newspaper reported yesterday.

91 killed in mine blast

AT LEAST 91 miners died in a gas explosion in a coal mine in Shanxi province, China, the latest in a series of disasters which have prompted national calls for better safety precautions.

Carey welcomed by Pope

THE Archbishop of Canterbury, George Carey, was welcomed in Rome by the Pope yesterday at the start of what promises to be a highly sensitive visit — the first by an English Prelate since the Church of England decided to ordain women.

Bishop saves church worker

AN OFFICE manager for a Roman Catholic diocese who admitted stealing more than \$1.2 million (\$900,000) of the Church's money avoided prison after her bishop pleaded for mercy.

New governor for Gibraltar

A FORMER Foreign Office minister was named as the next governor of Gibraltar yesterday. Sir Richard Luce will take up the job in February, succeeding Sir Hugo White, the Foreign Office said.

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صحة من الاصل

No joke in these gags

Press review

Serbia

PRESIDENT Milosevic's handling of the press is a reminder of the infamous hold the independent media has in this last bastion of old-style socialism. The state's policy has been to gag, jam and vilify.

For the first 13 days of the demonstrations, the state-run press found other things to write about. The day after 100,000 protesters marched past the *Politika* daily — the biggest demonstration seen in Belgrade since 1991 — the paper carried stories about Yugoslavia's expected upturn and a perky piece on the advantages of Christian Orthodox cuisine.

On Sunday night, the media silence came to an abrupt end when a television commentary warned that the opposition was bent on terrorism and would turn Belgrade into "a new Beirut" if it repeatedly showed stone-throwing demonstrators.

All yesterday's state-run press carried editorials reflecting the party line. *Politika* said: "These are not peaceful times and the law of the lynch mob is fortunately not applicable. Those who threw stones at *Politika* will be brought to court for their vandalism."

The state's *Vesnik Novosti* sneered in on the frequent appearance of children at the marches. One expert claimed: "This will have devastating effects on children's minds."

The opposition *Nasa Borba* carried an editorial pointing out the gross violation of the constitution of the opposition as a loss of nerve in the face of egg-throwing citizens. "Serbia finally showed it has more eggs than truncheons," it concluded.

The authorities have concentrated censorship on the new joint venture tabloid *Blic* and independent radio. Last week *Blic* was told by its state-owned printers that its print run would be slashed. A shareholder's representative wrote a vitriolic editorial saying the paper had no wish "to damage Yugoslavia's image abroad", prompting many of *Blic's* editorial staff to walk out and start their own paper.

Mid-way through the protest movement, Belgrade's only independent radio station, *B92* found its news broadcasts jammed. *B92* issued the following statement: "Yesterday, farmers erected more barricades on national road and rail links, causing chaos for a sixth day and brushing off warnings that they were inflicting heavy damage on the economy. Queues of trapped international and domestic lorries grew at more than 25 blockades."

The government is desperate to find a way to open the roads before there are shortages of basic goods — which would have disastrous implications for Greece's economy



Boy rides past burning barricade on the main motorway linking Athens with northern Greece PHOTOGRAPH: YANNIS BEHAVAS

Greece's bitter harvest

ΕΛΕΥΘΕΡΟΤΥΠΙΑ

Michalis Kourmouzis in Athens

THOUSANDS of Greek farmers have continued to protest against fuel prices and economic conditions, blocking many of the country's main motorways and effectively cutting it in half.

Yesterday, farmers erected more barricades on national road and rail links, causing chaos for a sixth day and brushing off warnings that they were inflicting heavy damage on the economy. Queues of trapped international and domestic lorries grew at more than 25 blockades.

The government is desperate to find a way to open the roads before there are shortages of basic goods — which would have disastrous implications for Greece's economy

and the battle against inflation.

Athens has tried to avoid discussing the two main issues which sparked the dispute — fuel prices and the rescheduling of about 200 million in debts with state banks — because of the high cost of caving in.

Realising this, the farmers have sought more achievable targets such as increases in the support prices for cotton, wheat and milk. If they secure these demands, they intend to press on with the fuel and debt issues. This seems to have led to a stalemate.

On Monday, the farmers plan to expand their blockades over more of the country and will be joined by workers in other sectors such as cattle farmers, citrus and other fruit growers.

The unrest is not just a typical trade union demand for more money but is rather a forerunner of serious troubles ahead. The agricultural sector is at the end of its tether

following recent European Union and international agreements. There is a growing trade deficit in agriculture because of the importation of products in which Greece has been traditionally self-sufficient, such as maize, wheat, sugar, wine, fruit and pulses.

EU subsidies are being cut, while programmes to diversify crops have been abandoned. Promises of earlier retirement for farmers have also been forgotten while the livestock sector is being decimated by debts and health scares.

In this situation farmers are seeking to cut their costs by demanding exemption from having to pay the special consumption tax on petrol, a 50 per cent reduction in their electricity tariffs, and the placing of all agricultural supplies in a special VAT bracket. They also want an increase of 150,000 tonnes in the EU milk quota for Greece.

As the dispute continues

the position of the farmers appears to be hardening and they are considering blockading large towns and cities. The action has until now been centred around Larisa in central Greece, but now appears to be spreading as far north as Thessaloniki and Serres and south into the Peloponnese.

Nerves fray in the Elysée

Germany's weary carping over monetary union is pushing France to the end of its tether, argues Fredy Gsteiger

DEUTSCHE ZEITUNG

FRANCE is a self-assured and confident nation. She does not need Germany telling her what to do. Yet this is precisely how Bonn is behaving. Paris can do what it likes — but the government across the Rhine always knows better: it must do this, and abandon that.

With striking regularity, Frankfurt's monetary guardians and Bonn's politicians are drawing attention to France's shortcomings, making thinly veiled threats: if you cannot fulfil this and that criteria then, we are sorry to say, Germany cannot accept you as a partner in economic and monetary union (EMU).

Small wonder Germany has become a thorn in France's flesh. Week in, week out, the French are being lectured by Theo Walgal, the finance minister, that "3 per cent means 3 per cent", and that strict limitations should be imposed on the budget deficit. Should the Bundesbank president, Hans Tietmeyer, be allowed to crack the monetary whip relentlessly while unashamedly promoting Germany's budgetary and political ends?

French politicians in favour of EMU are increasingly outraged at the torrent of complaints and self-righteous advice coming from Germany. Today, even Germany herself is unable to fulfil the sacred Maastricht criteria. Yet the politicians in Bonn cannot deviate from their promises without causing unrest at home.

The mark has become the state religion, but should France have to pay for this obsession? Must it accept all the blame, simply because the German government has talked itself into a corner? Above all, must all Europeans now have their economic policies dictated by Germany?

Distinctly lacking on the part of Germany is a fundamental appreciation of the radical changes which France is undergoing. Because Germany is not sufficiently interested in its neighbours, it is overlooking and underestimating their enormous

strengths in terms of monetary discipline and budgeting over the last 14 years.

For five years France has maintained lower inflation than Germany, and the franc has been stable for much longer than the mark. Until recently, it would have been inconceivable for the National Bank to be independent. Subsidies have been cancelled, enterprises privatised, employment programmes cut back. The French Republic can hardly be accused of laxity.

Furthermore, a real cultural revolution is taking place. The French have been expected to break with many traditions and dispense with various safety nets almost overnight. From a highly centralised state, France is transforming itself into a decentralised, liberal market economy. The French are unfamiliar with political, let alone economic liberalism. Liberalisation and globalisation, deregulation and privatisation: for France, these are dirty words.

The French have a different history and a different relationship with the state. Now, citizens are being asked to depend on it no longer. For the man on the street, this is difficult to accept. It is not surprising that resistance to the necessary austerity measures is stronger in France than elsewhere.

Some even delude themselves they can ignore globalisation. Indeed one can find advocates of a quite different policy both within the Gaullists and on the left wing of the Socialists.

For Jacques Chirac and Alain Juppé it is not easy to steadfastly adhere to the prescribed code under such difficult circumstances. In spite of this, they are committed to it. But every criticism from Bonn is received by the French as a knock sideways.

Admittedly, France has always been a sensitive country — but at the moment this sensitivity is justified. Germany is promoting its own self-interest too loudly, and praising the efforts of its most important partner too softly.

One can only emphatically urge Germans who are in favour of monetary union — given France's clearly frayed nerves — to refrain from pointing the finger like a headmaster. Theo Walgal and Hans Tietmeyer may well be correct in some matters. But do they have to insist on being superior all of the time?

Must all Europeans now have their economic policies dictated by Germany?

Jonathan Steele on why the West sees Red when it looks at the leader of Belarus

The bear's cub stirs next door

THE STRANGE thing about the highly authoritarian constitution which the Belarus president, Alexander Lukashenko, has just had endorsed by referendum is its similarity to Boris Yeltsin's. Indeed, whole sections — particularly those which give the president enormous powers and reduce parliament to impotence — are taken verbatim from the Russian text.

The way it was adopted also bears the hallmarks of Russia's December 1993 referendum. Just like Yeltsin, Lukashenko allowed no opponents access to state television to campaign against the referendum. Out of 2,249 minutes of broadcasting devoted to the issue, not one reflected the parliament's point of view.

Allegations of fraud cropped up in both countries. In Russia the margin of victory was much narrower and a shift of a few percentage points could have meant the turnout was too low to ensure the Russian constitution's passage.

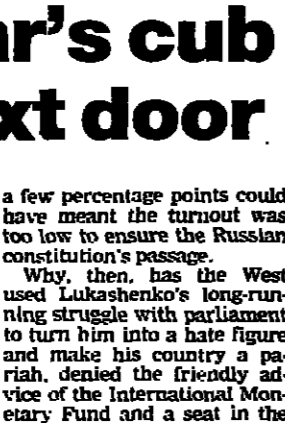
Why, then, has the West just had endorsed by referendum a constitution which is so similar to Boris Yeltsin's? The reasons have little to do with Lukashenko's lack of democracy and much to do with the market economy and Western foreign policy imperatives.

The Belarus president is the only leader of post-Soviet eastern or central Europe with the temerity to resist privatisation. He re-nationalised most banks, has prevented shops being sold off to their managers, and insists that the state and collective farms (of which he was once a chairman) continue to supply them.

Although the economy suffers many of Russia's market traumas even Lukashenko's opponents concede that inequalities are less glaring, crime is lower, and the mafia less prevalent. Street-begging and homelessness are rare, and prices in the shops are between a half and a third of those in Russia.

Worse than that, Lukashenko wants to forge a union with Russia and maintain a military link. Although he has sent the last nuclear missiles back to Russia, the West treats him as a menace.

"You can't marry the Belarusian parliament to the Rus-



Lukashenko... defiantly against market economics

Others have clung to the presidential honey-pot, though not always for long.

As in Russia, greed and unaccountable power occupy the space where democratic debate and the public interest ought to be. Like Yeltsin, Lukashenko has expanded the presidential bureaucracy into an apparatus larger than the old Central Committee. He runs the country via a host of non-state entities.

"He has three bases of support," says Piotr Martsev, a thirty-something former Young Communist League official who edits a business paper.

"There are the cronies to whom he has given the best properties in Minsk, tourist complexes and holiday homes; workers in the state sector who are on his payroll; and some businessmen who worked with him and got tax privileges and the rights to import goods without customs duties."

The handful of genuine democrats are left stranded. Stanislav Shushkevich, who headed the parliament until Lukashenko's takeover in 1994, still hopes that progressive politics will one day have a place in Belarus.

It seems quixotic. The saddest place in Minsk is the old execution ground at Kurapaty where Stalin's police shot hundreds of thousands between 1938 and 1941. Unearthed in 1988, the forest glades could have been turned into a national monument. But in its two years of power the post-communist government failed even to put up a redesign so that school children and other visitors could come and learn to distance themselves from their country's authoritarian past. Instead, in twisted form it lives on around them.

ian parliament to the Belarusian parliament to the Rus-

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United again (for now)

The Tories close ranks: until the next Euro-split

ARE THE Conservatives completely mad? Not quite, but they seem to be getting that way. At the weekend, the Tory rumour mills suggested that the Prime Minister was about to make a fresh demarche on Europe...

sceptics don't believe a word of it. They are forever dreaming up fresh fantasies about the preparations for monetary union, forgetting that the Chancellor is absolutely right to insist, as again he has always done, that the third stage of EMU will have consequences for Britain whether we are in or out...

End of story? If only, from the Tories' point of view, that it were so. The reason why the party is aflame with these excitements is that Labour has called their bluff over the single currency referendum...

Yesterday, we published a poll which showed that, after a brief closing of the gap during the autumn, the Tories are once again 19 points behind Labour. The Tories' November recovery had followed a party conference in which they took a stance on Europe, agreed it, and stuck to it...

Preserving the best of the NHS

But Labour still needs to match Tory spending promises

LABOUR produced its latest health proposals yesterday — but wrapped them in two separate book covers. Which would you prefer? In the Daily Mirror, the shadow health secretary set out his strategy for restoring the NHS to the structure which was known and loved...

tation, increased bureaucracy, complete with gagging clauses that have turned a national health system into a national stealth service. There is a further problem for Labour: the last thing the NHS needs now is another major upheaval five years after the last. That is why Labour's evolutionary approach is welcome even if its feigned revolutionary rhetoric is regrettable...

How to reduce road rage

One solution is to give cars a bit more body language

ROAD RAGE — which claimed its latest tragic victim this week — is an affliction that is barely two years old. The police are right to point out that it doesn't officially exist and that violent crimes involving cars are covered by existing legislation...

when required. But part of the problem is surely down to design faults. Cars are impersonal with misleading body language. When they hoot, it is seen as aggressive, even though the driver may not have been trying to draw attention to a flat tyre...



Letters to the Editor

A little legal lesson

CONTRARY to David Hart (Don't sue the teacher, December 3), I say: do sue, but the LEA, not the teacher. Legal, not political, action is the way to ensure one's rights...

UNDER Labour, school students will lose the right to sue if they fail examinations because of their teachers' negligence. David Blunkett says this is because any damages they would win would be better spent on bringing the school up to scratch...

rights. If I bought double glazing and it was poorly installed, I would take the contractors to court, if necessary, to gain compensation. It is exactly the same principle.

Professor A H Halsey pointed out in your columns on January 18, 1994 that the 1983 Act (Section 192), on the LEA to secure a child's attendance at a school which fulfils this criterion of suitability.

Blunkett's proposed legislation would sweep away the rights of vulnerable people and by the foundations of future injustices in our schools, where even the most blatant negligence would be exempt from action.

DAVID HART does not mention student responsibility. Were they sufficiently instructed, or did they spend too much time watching TV and going out with their friends rather than doing their homework?

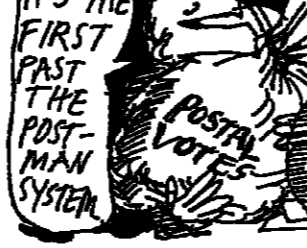
This accusation seems to be borne out when, apparently, the providers — David Hart for the teachers and Graham Lane for the Association of Metropolitan Authorities — defend the system against the consumers on the basis that if a court decides that they were at fault, then these mean litigants will force the poor, pious providers to do even worse by the rest of their customers...

He dare not oppose the requirement for schools to provide more information, but he intends to ensure students can't put the information to use.

HOW long will it be before teachers start suing those parents who neglect their duty of care in bringing up their children? I refer to the parents of the badly behaved children who go on to disrupt the orderly learning environment which can lead to under-achievement by other children.

The Bel tolls

FOR 30 years I have blamed Jack Straw for painting the slogan "Dick Knowles and John Anson: Enemies Of The Working Class" on the pavement outside 9 Queen Square, Leeds, when I was secretary of Leeds Labour Party and John Anson was the Yorkshire regional organiser. Jack has always denied it. It must have been Bel Littlejohn, though I am surprised that she could so "denigrate" correctly.



So Bel Littlejohn has solved another mystery (November 29). The left graffiti slogan on the wall of Leeds University, "Organise For Anarchy", bore the tag "BF" which I always thought was that of the then Labour candidate for Moor-town in the 1965 municipal election (Bernard Ingham). I now realise that the tag was "BF". My belated apologies to both comrades Jack and comrade Bernard. It was that militant feminist Bel all the time.

NICK Sparrow, of pollsters NICM, omits some crucial factors in his discussion of the accuracy of opinion polls (Polls apart on the voting slips, December 2). First, neither of the polling methods he describes addresses the circumstances in the respondents' constituencies. Were I to be telephoned, I should give a confident "Liberal Democrat" response, but my local circumstances might lead me to vote Conservative (if I do so appeared to provide a greater chance of a balanced Parliament) or Labour (for the same reason). Others might have different reasons for casting a tactical vote.

Next, he doesn't tell us if any check is made on whether the respondent is a voter (ie on the register). An estimated 4 per cent of those entrusted to register have not done so. He also disregards the matter of postal voters and twice-registered people, from students to second-home owners.

No bonus for the Lottery

PETER Davis, director-general of the National Lottery, felt able to challenge (Letters, December 2) the suggestion made in your columns that the Government had conducted no research into the impact of the National Lottery on individuals.

WHY is Terry Marsh standing as Lib-Dem candidate for Basildon? It is a seat he cannot possibly win. By splitting the opposition vote he will make the chances of a Tory victory that much easier.

ENSURING that Lottery players have what he calls an "informed choice" hasn't caused Peter Davis to prevent Camelot promoting the Lottery as a way of making contributions to worthy causes, using such happy sloganeering as "Fun for your funds for projects like these" and leading people perhaps to think a bigger slice of the Lottery is going to charitable causes than is actually the case.

Lisa Jardine and the rape of our cultural heritage

LISA Jardine's ruling is certainly clear: banish "graphic representations of acts which violate, harm or humiliate anybody" (It may be art, but is it violence, December 2 Letters, November 3). Basements of museums round the world will be filled with a substantial fraction of European art, from Breguel to Bacon. Photo-journalism does not even have the excuse of being art, so those horrifying scenes of the liberation of Belsen or of the screaming Vietnamese girl running down the road scorched with napalm ought never to have been published.

FOLLOWING Lisa Jardine's logic, should every picture of the crucifixion disappear from churches? Should public artistic commemoration of the Holocaust be censored? Should we in Wales remove memorials to our princes because they fought the English, thus doing them harm?

CHRISTIANS will probably point out that the purpose of a crucifix is not to encourage crucifixion, nor has it often had that effect: the Belsen photographs are understood by most people as a powerful plea that such events should never occur again, though of course they have not ensured that. Jardine's ruling completely ignores any distinction between what an image depicts and what it means.

HAVE not seen the (other) painting of the Sabines in Oxford Town Hall, which Lisa Jardine says the women councillors want to "remove into storage". If it was removed to the Astorian museum, more people could see it and come to their own opinion; but if it is hidden away, how can I, or anyone else, reach an informed judgement? Christopher Rollason, 17 avenue Foch, F-97000 Metz, France.

GO to see Seven Brides for Seven Brothers, Lisa, and you may work it out. Lucy and Chloe Dallimore (14), 263 Hills Road, Cambridge CB2 2RP.

WHY is Terry Marsh standing as Lib-Dem candidate for Basildon? It is a seat he cannot possibly win. By splitting the opposition vote he will make the chances of a Tory victory that much easier.

Terry Marsh on the ropes

THE Terry Marsh of your article (in the yellow corner, December 2) is very different from the Terry Marsh I remember at Labour Party meetings in Poplar and Canary Wharf last year. I was then chair of the CLP and I don't remember Terry saying anything at all.

ANY election victory by ex-Champion Marsh will be very old hat indeed. Back in 1886, Bristol-born, British Empire and Labour Party member and heavyweight champion John Gully punched his way out of the London debtors' prison, where he had celebrated his 21st birthday, to become MP for Pontefract. He sat for five years.

WHY is Terry Marsh standing as Lib-Dem candidate for Basildon? It is a seat he cannot possibly win. By splitting the opposition vote he will make the chances of a Tory victory that much easier.

Investing his ring earnings wisely, Gully bought three Yorkshire coalmines and used the profits to rear and raise two Derby-winning racehorses — St Giles and Andover. A millionaire by the time of his death in 1882, he received a posthumous show-business honour 120 years later when Henry Cooper impersonated him in a movie.

A Country Diary

FORT TROLLHIEM: Pale, luminous daylight spreads from invisible dawns, trapped in nets of fog, floating through the rolling Devon countryside. A huge, black poplar looms from the misty banks of the River Otter. Its dark, knobby boughs rake a bright blue sky above. Slowly, the fogs draw back into water-meadows and the last smoky wreaths are sucked into the streams. Oaks and beeches hold their burnished gold in winter sunshine. Smoke curls from chimneys, dogs bark, voices, drums and flutes peel out into the morning. Up the muddy track through pasture, Fort Trollhiem stands atop a little flinty hill on the edge of a plantation of tall, dark firs. Crossing the rickety ladder over the palisades is like crossing into another time. Inside this little hill-fort are tarpanin-covered dwellings, gardens and communal living areas. Fort Trollhiem, one of three camps near Ottery St Mary, is part of the longest-running road protest in Eng-

land. When built, the new A30 extension will smash through woods and copses, shear through rolling hills and be carried across the water-meadows on huge concrete pillars. It's hard to imagine a more devastating testimony to 20th century brutality in this landscape. Beneath Fort Trollhiem, in the path of this road, is a warren of tunnels and chambers where the protesters will lock themselves to concrete blocks to resist eviction by the bailiffs and delay the road-builders. The evictions could begin any day now. Life in the camps follows the natural rhythms of the day, until night falls and great, dark sweeps of rain wash over the woods and meadows. But under the mud and roots the burrowing trolls are ready. With a courage that seems so in tune with the beauty of the land they have vowed to protect, in their subterranean darkness they are prepared for the siege.

PAUL EVANS

صوتنا من الامل

Diary Matthew Norman

In what theatre critics will come to see as the most significant portrayal of a British politician since David Hare's Kinnoch in The Absence of War, Environment Secretary Little Gumm Gumm is the central character in a new play.

Abortion debate is still a minefield

Commentary Catherine Bennett

FOR the first time in many years, anti-abortion obsessives are in good heart. Since the early summer, hardly a week has gone by without an opportunity for the champions of fetal personhood to threaten doctors or to threaten politicians, and to threaten politicians, and to threaten politicians, and to threaten politicians.

least three papers on our side." Phyllis Bowman, the director of SFUC excited recently, "and you've even got the Guardian running an article calling for IVF to be abolished." Capitalising on this apparent support for their cause, pro-embryo activists have devised a more ambitious scheme, the Pro-Life Alliance, which plans to field 50 parliamentary candidates at the next election. Its object is partly to force abortion into party politics, by obliging their target MPs to make statements on the issue, and also to earn themselves a party political broadcast, in order to disgust viewers with scenes of late-termination carnage.

Mainly, most people, though they may consider abortion a grave action, do not believe that it is infanticide. The hopes of the Pro-Life Alliance presumably rest on the fact that this widespread tolerance is rarely reflected in public life. In the House of Commons, for example, the 1967 (pro-choice) Act is supported by a majority of only 238 to 264. Similarly, many recent media reports have lingered on the flaming rhetoric of pro-lifers, whether they are churchmen, politicians or full-time activists, while the opposite, more commonplace point of view is represented only by the familiar rebuttals of the Birth Control Trust, or a few firm phrases from Sir David Steel. The result is that some of the most tasteless and bizarre statements by pro-life extremists go unchallenged.

Most people, though they may consider abortion a grave action, do not believe that it is infanticide. In the absence of such protest, MPs who are pro-choice have a still greater duty to defend the interests of the country. Given that any pro-choice statement is likely to lead to tirades from Roman Catholic bishops, or the canonisation of 14-year-old schoolgirls, you can understand the reluctance to speak up for individual freedom. But if no one does, the debate will remain hysterical, polarised between two equally unrepresentative camps. How many, outside the Catholic Church, share Cardinal Wintkin's belief that the termination of a fetus of a few weeks is equivalent to the amputation of a five-year-old child at Dumbarns Primary? It is equally hard to believe that many women would now subscribe to this assertion from Jane Roe of the Abortion Law Reform Association: "As far as we are concerned it is irrelevant what the fetus looks like until it is capable of existence outside a womb."

If you dance in the streets here, you die



David McKie

C ECIL PARKINSON'S late-90s dream of fast-tracking the land with £20 billion-worth of new roads took a further post-Thatcherite pounding in last month's Budget—the fourth year in a row that this programme has been cut. "A hit-and-run Budget catastrophe," raged the RAC. Conservationists, though, like Friends of the Earth, were reported to be delighted. They weren't dancing in the streets in Collingbourne Ducis, however. Not that they'd dance in the street there at any time. If they did they'd be swiftly mown down by some monster juggernaut speeding dairy products to the Midlands. They could hardly even dance on the pavements, so close does the traffic pass. On the bend in the road by the church (which has recently had to find £18,000 to replace a wall wiped out by a heavy lorry) there's no pavement at all. The church lets schoolchildren take a cut through the churchyard. If it didn't, there would be funerals.

now travel in the early morning, partly because they service shopping precincts where access is only permitted before shopping hours. Morlands of Abingdon, Spillers Milling, Thames Valley Eggs, Iceland, again. As national supermarkets squeeze out local traders, as the search for cheap food eliminates the local supplier, so the procession through Collingbourne Ducis becomes more and more swollen by conveyors of food and drink. Quartermain's Transport, Robert Lee (London) Ltd, Woolworth's, "right up your street for value". Except, of course, that Woolworth's are somebody else's street, not Collingbourne's. It is others in bigger settlements who get the benefit, and villages like this which pay the price in disruption. It isn't only the noise and pollution; it's the sense of being in enemy occupation. The merciless lorries which stop you crossing the road are like an invading army. And it's going to get much, much worse. Traffic nationally is expected to double in 30 years. The increase will be even faster in counties like Hampshire and Wiltshire (Collingbourne is close to the border) which are destined to take the highest share of the 4.4 million new homes we are told we will need in the next 20 years. If it isn't given bypasses, this traffic will invent its own, as it's already doing across clogged-up Wiltshire, where even un-Euclidean the roadways find themselves thronged by lorries escaping from overloaded As and Es.

B EIL MOONEY, my old friend from the 60s, writes a Daily Mail "essay" reconciling her liberality with the desire to censor films like Crash. However, in an otherwise splendid article, one sentence leaves the door open to misinterpretation when she writes that the tone of Gillian Freeman's 1967 treatise on pornography was "as terminally flip-pant as a typical Guardian column today". Bel, would I know, it was in a column that was in no way referring to the Diary.

A N intriguing possibility surrounds the vacant editorship of the Times Educational Supplement. Word has it that, although the favourite remains Peter Wilby, who edited the Independent on Sunday with such distinction, another fancied runner is now the Observer columnist Melanie Phillips. Since savagaging the entire profession, which she described as being "in a slough of low expectations and underachievement", in her book All Must Have Prizes, Ms Phillips has become the country's leading hate figure for teachers, and her appointment would be the loose equivalent of putting the Dewhurst family in charge of Britain's vegans. The TES is oddly coy about the matter, the current deputy editor refusing to confirm the existence of a short-list. It does exist, though, and Ms Phillips is on it.

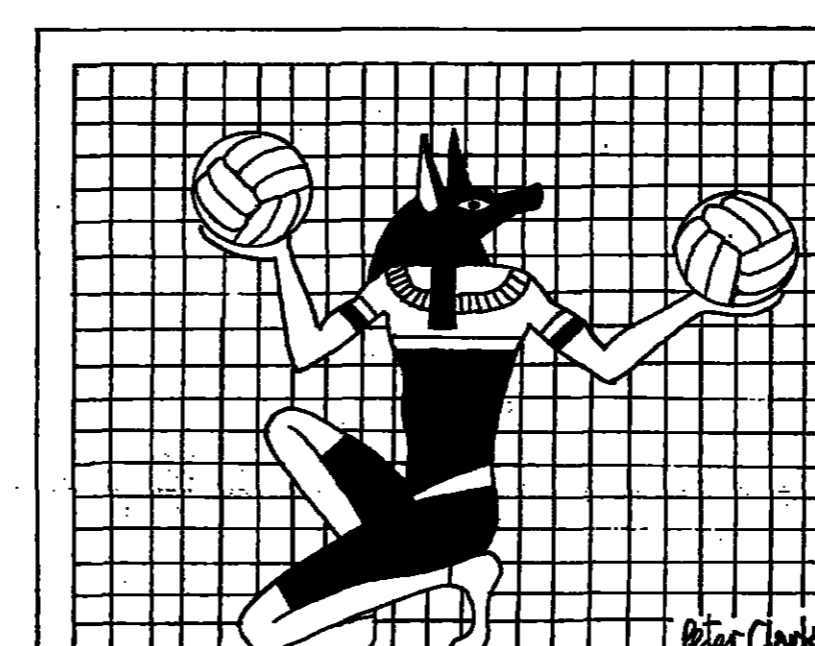
A PRESS release arrives about a recent dinner at Claridge's to launch the first new cigar for a decade. Even though Lord Wyatt of Westford was of the party, it would be indefensibly rash to name the cigar until its importer, Hunters & Frankau, has sent a box of 25, or indeed 50, for sampling. This column's reputation for exhaustive research was not won without effort, and it will not be lightly jeopardised now.

M Y new friend Sir Tim Bell has vanished. Sir Tim, you will recall, promised on Monday lunchtime to come back swiftly with a response to Sir Arthur Lloyd Webber, after the Diary informed him that our sources confirm the story about the solitary voiding of the bladder during the interval of Jesus Christ Superstar's recent first night. We are not prepared, quite yet, to do red alert. However, in the light of precedent with Tory PR characters (I need remind no one of the kidnappings, and subsequent replacings by robotic clones, of Dr Julian Lewis), we are mightily concerned.

A YOUNG Scotsman arrested in Rotherham has added racism to his offences. Police magazine reports, after showing "you English bastards" at "the officer who charged him with being drunk and disorderly. The feelings of the officer, PC Stefano Giuseppe (Gillardoni), are not recorded.



Sir Nicholas Scott



The debate over Sir Denis Mahon's collection spurs Brian Micklethwait to demand an end to all government arts subsidy - in order to improve the product Art in the market-place

AS an opponent of all subsidies to the arts, I note with some glee that Sir Denis Mahon has cooked up a scheme to pressure future governments to be as keen on arts subsidies as he is himself. He has promised to give the nation paintings worth £25 million, provided that future governments look after them properly without cutting arts funding.

When will there be screens able to reproduce all the paintings of the past instead of just one?

Guardian-reader-type sense: it becomes more crass, vulgar and stupid than would be the case if highrow types also gave their attention, as producers, critics and consumers. It is simply not the case that, just because something is an ornament to our nation's culture — "part of our national heritage" — it should be funded by the state. Traditions — artistic and of other sorts — grow and thrive in the free society, fuelled by the resources and the enthusiasm of those participants who are enthusiastically about them. It is only when traditions start to fade or ossify that people like Sir Denis Mahon demand that the tradition in question be preserved with state subsidies. If this demand succeeds, the rot really sets in, because the pressure to renew is switched off. For art — in this case the art market — which is now doing most to concentrate minds on the skills of art preservation and presentation, not government subsidies. What this market would be like without government subsidies we can only guess, but I say, let's find out. It would surely survive and probably thrive, not least because now we are to contemplate art might be discovered if the business — yes, the business — of looking after and presenting paintings became less nationalised, ossified and state-welfare dependent. Consider another great ornament of our nation's culture: football. Being spared state subsidies, football is not, so it speak, a political football. Yet it more than pays for itself by an accident that English football — undistracted by the lure of two scrapes. He was not deselected the first time, when he ran away from a car crash leaving a child trapped in a pushchair — "a minor indiscretion," according to one of his supporters. It was contemptible behaviour, worthy of Edward Kennedy. The second incident, when he was harmlessly drunk, was less serious in itself. But his explanation was quite incredible. He is worthy of our human sympathy. But why on earth should he remain an MP? There may well be 100 MPs, in every party, far worse than this sad and gutless man. The Tories of Kensington and Chelsea have shown the way to their constituency parties too. A thousand people attended their meeting on Monday evening. They debated the issues. They may well have been influenced by local, petty jealousies and rightwing ideology of which we disapprove. But they established a principle that ought to act as a beacon everywhere.

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So farewell then, Nicholas Scott

Matthew Engel hails the fall of the Tory MP as a victory for democracy

THE news that Sir Nicholas Scott MP had been deselected by the Tories of Kensington and Chelsea was the lead story in four of Britain's national papers yesterday. It led the BBC's morning news bulletins. The most telling comment came on Breakfast News. It came as a complete shock, Jon Sopel said. No shock at Westminster, expected it. Everyone there assumed Sir Nicholas would be right. And there has been, throughout this, an undercurrent that what was happening was vaguely disgraceful, possibly undemocratic, certainly unBritish. He was a nice chap, a decent cricketer even. If it could happen to him, MPs of every party seem to be thinking, it could happen to us.

minister for 13 years. He served "loyally" in Northern Ireland and in Social Security, where he had to push through legislation which his own daughter famously and publicly opposed, and in which he seemed to have trouble believing. He was rewarded with a Tory MP's knight-hood, a Tory MP's knighthood in itself. If at any point he ever contemplated resignation on a principle, it does not seem to have been reported. It is a career that sums up everything that is wrong with British politics. Of late, he has been in

Koji Kobayashi

Playing to win in Japan

THE GREAT myth about Japan's industrial miracle is that it happened through harmonious consensus rather than individual effort...



Kobayashi recalled working three nights without sleep to beat a deadline, cooling the resulting fever by putting his feet in a bucket of cold water

backer of the Japanese Co-Prosperity Sphere, developing a telegraph for the Manchurian railway...

forces with radio equipment. It then boldly carved out new markets, both geographical and technological...

than "plug compatible" copies of IBM. In 1977, at a conference in Atlanta, he predicted that computers and telecommunications would converge into a single information infrastructure...

David Herbert, who has died aged 69, was a remarkable publisher, in the old-fashioned but widely admirable sense. His emphasis on quality of production and a highly individual choice of books no doubt reduced accountants to exasperation but the results were often successful...

David Herbert

A shelf full of quality

After a schoolmastering stint at Eton and at Christ's Hospital in 1950s, he went briefly to Aldus Books and then to Studio Vista, under the aegis of the Rev Timothy Beaman...



Herbert... real flair

Irving Gordon

Simply unforgettable

IRVING Gordon, who has died aged 81, was one of the foot soldiers in the vast army of composers and lyricists which dominated the golden age of the American popular song...

daughter Natalie re-recorded the song as a duet with her posthumous partner. There is one intriguing footnote to Gordon's career which has nothing to do with songwriting and may explain why so able a lyricist wrote comparatively little...



Songs of praise... Irving Gordon collects his Grammy award in 1992

Letter

Alan Knowles writes: In his obituary on Reginald Bevin (November 19) John Biffen tells the story of how Bevin told the press, when asked what he as Postmaster-General thought about the BBC's new satire programme That Was The Week That Was...

Ernie Leslie

Practical and pragmatic unionist

ERNE Leslie, who has died aged 76, was a prominent figure in the Scottish trades union movement for almost four decades. He was crucially involved in defending the British Leyland truck and tractor plant at Bathgate, employing 6,000 workers...

high politics of a particularly turbulent union in which every official had to face the membership for election on a regular basis. Sir Gavin Laird, the union's former general secretary, recalled: "Ernie Leslie was a man dedicated to the people he represented. Generally, he saw the best guarantee of their interests to be the profitability and success of the companies they worked for..."

Birthdays

Farhad Afshar, neurosurgeon, 55; Barbara Amiel, columnist, 65; A L Rowse, historian, 83; Patsy Stone, actress, 46; The Rev Prof Cecil Weir, Hebrew and Semitic scholar, 99.

Death Notices

JESSE DAME, PENLOPE, peacefully at home on 28th November 1996 - much loved husband of Bobbie, much loved mother of Stephen and David, Grandmother of Ben, Robert and Miranda. Funeral, St Laurence's Church, Bath, Saturday December 7 at 2.30pm.

Jackdaw

Sade, or having a nice sing-song with Cliff Richard backed by St Francis... From the first moment when Cruella appears in that sleekest of cars, which I imagine as a sort of cross between Lady Dicker's famous Sds Daimler and the Batmobile...

unEnglish and marbled, of course - hymns the Jennie fiddle's Jennie fiddle in the new movie in Elle Decor. Loose cannons THE younger Hastings have little experience of rough shooting. I made the mistake of introducing them to driven game much too soon...

decent or humane. I admire the work done by the Countryside Foundation to get sensible information about country life and field sports into schools, but it is a struggle. Most school-teachers are instinctively unsympathetic to the cause. My daughter stopped hunting for several years, but went out for the odd day last season and was surprised by how much she enjoyed herself...

times than I can tell you." So... they did things a little differently. TBWA added a large room full of tables and desk-top computers where employees could spread out their materials. They also added more project rooms and some smaller, more private spaces where writers and art directors could concentrate better...

Advertisement for Jackdaw magazine, featuring a picture of a crow and contact information for the publisher.

political row
Secret
A
Lucas cuts to 3,000
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Finance Guardian

Secret plan to split BAT fails

Paul Murphy

A SECRET plan to split BAT Industries, the tobacco and financial services combine, in two has collapsed, the Guardian learned last night. The abortive plan would have involved the merger of BAT's financial business, which includes Allied Dunbar and Eagle Star in the UK, with one of Britain's other leading insurance groups, City merchant bank Lazard Brothers and stockbrokers Cazenove are known to have been working for months on a

dramatic deal that would have transformed Britain's insurance sector. At the same time, with the demerger of the group's tobacco business, which controls almost 20 per cent of the American market, BAT would have been able to address concerns voiced by several of its major shareholders that the group was at risk from the threat of US smoking-related litigation. While the company declined to comment yesterday, it was planning to make an announcement at the beginning of December and had prepared full documentation for shareholders and the authorities.

Stock market sources indicated that the deal — which is believed to have encompassed a bid for a composite insurer such as Commercial Union — could well be resurrected in the future. BAT has clearly been preparing to hive off the Dunbar and Eagle Star businesses, together with its Threadneedle Asset Management fund management group, since before the summer, when it announced a reorganisation of the division. This involved grouping the three units under a new umbrella company, British and American Financial Services. A merger of this new group

and Commercial Union might have created a financial powerhouse valued at £15 billion or more. The plan, however, is thought to have run into trouble early last week, though the reason remains unclear. Last night, stockbrokers pointed to a burst of speculative activity in shares in Commercial Union a week ago, on Budget day. At the time of the financial services reorganisation, in July, BAT's option of acquiring a bank was ruled out. Sandy Leitch, head of the financial wing, said at the time: "We have looked at acquiring a bank a number of times be-

fore. But, at the present time, the prices are very high and we do not like the look of the inherited bricks and mortar we might buy." A little over a month later, in August, the scale of the potential tobacco-related challenge faced by the group in the US became apparent, after a Florida court awarded \$480,000 to a former smoker who claimed he had been misled into thinking cigarette smoking was safe. Shares in BAT fell by almost 20 per cent in 10 days and have only recently begun to recover. The City has been awash with speculation for weeks that a predator was stalking

Imperial Tobacco, the cigarette firm which has just been demerged from the Hanson Industrial conglomerate. Analysts saw a fit between BAT's mainly US tobacco business — with brands such as Full Mast and Lucky Strike — with Imperial's portfolio of Embassy, Superkings and John Player Special. "Shareholders would love to see a demerger of BAT," one analyst said. "We have seen its famous US competitor, RJR Nabisco, have its own planned demerger blocked by potential smoking litigants. We can only speculate on what has blocked this."

Notebook

How to deflate inflation figures



Edited by Mark Milner

THE US government will today be offered a statistical helping hand towards its goal of abolishing the budget deficit by the year 2002, with the release of a Congressional report arguing that the consumer price index (CPI) overstates inflation by up to one percentage point. The argument rests on two pillars. First, the CPI fails to pick up changes in behaviour resulting from price changes. If chicken gets dearer, shoppers switch to pork — but the index keeps measuring chicken. This "substitution" effect means that the real cost of living rises more slowly than the CPI suggests.

Secondly, the CPI fails to pick up new patterns of consumption, with new goods added to the index only once a decade. The findings of the commission, headed by economist Michael Boskin, are of more than academic interest. If Congress agrees with the report, legislators could decide to reduce the amount by which CPI-linked welfare benefits are uprated each year. Lopping off a percentage point could save \$261 billion (\$160 billion) over the next six years.

For those countries struggling to meet single European currency qualification, the inflation argument might look attractive. But even in the US the debate about the extent of the bias is likely to rage for some time: the officials who produce the CPI acknowledge an overshoot but insist it is no more than 0.1 percentage points. And with growing discontent over the tough new welfare law, politicians may be reluctant to rub salt in the wound.

In Britain's case, the retail price index (RPI) basket is updated every year so the impact of a "new product bias" is much less. Treasury officials doubt whether consumption patterns change as quickly as Boskin estimates.

Most important, pensioners who see their payments cut because of a statistical sleight of hand are likely to be unimpressed. Labour's inclination to stick with uprating by inflation, rather than restoring the pre-Thatcher link to earnings, has already angered Barbara Castle.

Even if the economic numbers add up — and here the immortal phrase lies, damned lies and statistics springs readily to mind — the political ones certainly will not.

Stripping the gift

TODAY'S auction of £2.5 billion of gilts due in 2002 is widely expected to go well. Gilts look cheap compared to other major bonds, especially if the

industry currently offers commercial and domestic customers an indifferent standard of service at unjustifiably high prices — profit margins at 35 per cent are not uncommon," said marketing director Clive Smith.

Number one extermination squad Rentokil, has perhaps half the business. There are two other big-ish names, National Britannia and a US group with a name designed to bring out the Schwarzenegger in every pest-controller: Terminix. Dyno-Rod expects to be nationwide in three years.

Richard Strand, of the BPCA, said the market was hard to quantify because of the huge role of local authorities in exterminating domestic pests for little or no charge. The private sector turned over perhaps £200 million a year and in total Britain boasted 8,000 pest controllers.

There is a lot more to pest control than rat-catching. Smaller pests include product-specific creepy-crawlers including grain crickets, the pest of the weevil and the hide beetle (curse of tanneries). But honey-bees enjoy the distinction of being just about the only thing pest controllers are not allowed to zap.

LucasVarity cuts to cost 3,000 jobs

Chris Barrie

Business Correspondent

ENGINEERING giant LucasVarity is to axe 3,000 jobs and sell 13 businesses employing another 5,000 people as part of a huge cost-cutting exercise. With half the jobs to go in the UK, the move is a dramatic escalation of the redundancies expected when the motor components and aerospace company Lucas Industries merged with diesel engine-maker Varity three months ago.

The moves will cut LucasVarity's workforce to 48,000 and save £120 million a year from January 1998, the new company's second full financial year. The savings are almost twice those estimated when the merger was announced in May and are on top of savings of \$65 million already identified for the next two years.

Restructuring and redundancies will cost £120 million as an exception to the group's financial year next January. Another £130 million will be charged in asset write-downs. Chief executive Victor Rice said the company's restructuring was undertaken a "thorough and total review".

Mr Rice agreed that in the medium term LucasVarity may seek even greater size through a merger or acquisition with another group. But in the short term the high priority was to bolster the

group's electronics and electrical businesses, almost certainly through acquisition. The business to be sold include four UK firms: Lucas Heavy Duty Products of Acton, west London, employs 500 people and makes parts for trucks and buses. Coventry-based Lucas Industrial Components makes car parts. Specialist metals company Lucas Nitrox employs 400 people in Birmingham. And Lucas Assembly and Test Systems employs 200 people, also in Birmingham. Another five companies slated for sale have yet to be publicly identified.

Mr Rice said the group was "reasonably down the line" on concluding deals. The disposals cover sales of £270 million, representing 6 per cent of the group. The revamp follows LucasVarity's decision to axe one-third of its top managers and to concentrate on leading positions in the key markets of automotive, diesel engines, aftermarket supply and aerospace.

Trade unions at the group's UK operations said they believed most of the job losses would be achieved on a voluntary basis. Mr Rice said he was confident the cultural problems of merging the two companies were now largely dealt with. News of the job losses and cost-cutting lifted the company's share price in early trading, but shares fell back to close 16.5p down at 234p following a downward assessment of the automotive market by company executives.



A fireman takes a street shower yesterday after tackling a blaze at the Treasury in Whitehall. PHOTOGRAPH: GRAHAM TURNER

Treasury raises £257m in sale of residual government stakes

Ian King

THE Treasury collected £257 million towards last week's Budget tax cuts yesterday, when it sold most of the Government's remaining stakes in privatised businesses such as British Energy, National Grid and Scottish Power.

The sell-off means the Government has now almost completed its £1.5 billion "mop-up" privatisation, announced last year, aimed at selling residual holdings in privatised companies ahead of the election. It brings the total amount raised by the Government's privatisation of former nationalised industries to £55 billion. After yesterday's sale, the Government owns a 0.5 per cent stake in BT worth about

£242 million, and a small stake in British Energy, worth about £7.5 million, which has been retained in order to cover bonus share entitlements. It also still has an estimated 14 per cent stake in the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company, whose share price has been ravaged by the long-running industrial dispute with a number of dockers sacked last year.

The main holding sold yesterday was a near 13 per cent stake in British Energy, whose initial privatisation in July flopped when the shares opened at 96p, against the 105p at which they had been sold to City institutions.

However, the shares have recovered since then, enabling the Treasury to sell the stake yesterday at 147½p a share to broker HSBC James Capel.

A spokesman for NM Rothschild, which organised a competitive auction for the stakes, explained: "We thought it represented a good time and a good price to sell all of them."

What was sold

British Energy	£119 million
Scottish Power	£64 million
Scottish Hydro-Electric	£24 million
Sewers Trust	£24 million
National Grid	£13 million
Northern Ireland Electricity	£7 million
Wessex Water	£3 million
National Power	£1 million
PowerGen	£1 million
South West Water	£1 million
TOTAL	£257 million

The second biggest stake sold was a 1.6 per cent holding in Scottish Power, worth about £54 million. The buyer was Kleinwort Benson, which also snapped up the Government's remaining stakes in National Grid, Northern Ireland Electricity, Scottish Hydro-Electric, National Power and PowerGen.

Other brokers involved in the sell-off included ABN Amro Hoare Govett, which bought a small stake in South West Water, and Merrill Lynch, which bought stakes in Severn Trent Water and Wessex Water.

A notable exclusion on this occasion was SBC Warburg, which this time last year handled the biggest single element of the mop-up privatisation, the £513 million sale of the Government's remaining stake in BP.

Chancellor's adviser talks down inflation

Sarah Ryte

THE BANK of England is too pessimistic about the outlook for inflation, according to a senior Treasury economist yesterday — suggesting that the Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, will resist pressure to raise interest rates when he meets the Bank governor, Eddie George, next week.

Mr Clarke's economic forecasts came under scrutiny at the Commons Treasury Select Committee after three of his panel of independent advisers told MPs last week that base rates should be raised to 7 per

cent immediately in order to dampen inflationary pressure. "The Bank's open desire to see interest rates raised to guarantee Mr Clarke's inflation target of 2.5 per cent is based on forecasts which differ from the Treasury model."

The chief economic adviser to the Treasury, Alan Budd, told MPs on the committee that the Bank "and other outsiders" had repeatedly been too pessimistic about inflationary pressure. He said: "We are not seeing an unsustainable boom. Many mistakes have been made because people remain over-optimistic about the level of sus-

tainable growth." He added that the economy could grow at above trend for two years without threatening low, stable inflation. A surge in oil prices had fed through the system and boosted the official measure of inflation, he said.

MPs also quizzed Treasury officials about the Government's missing billions of VAT receipts and told them to do their sums again. Mr Clarke blamed the £6 billion shortfall in the official estimate of VAT revenue this year as the reason he has been forced to raise his original target for the public sector borrowing requirement.

But MPs said they feared that the new estimates of VAT receipts could also be flawed. Mr Budd estimated that £1 billion was lost as a result of illegal tax avoidance, £1 billion as a result of rigorous tax planning by firms "within the letter and the spirit of the law"; and a further £1 billion because of technical changes in the tax system.

The chairman of the Commons committee, Matthew Carrington, demanded to know where the other £3 billion had gone. He said: "I suggest you go back and look at the way the VAT receipts explanation is made."

TOURIST RATES — BANK SELLS

Australia 2.00	France 6.63	Italy 2.87	Singapore 2.10
Austria 17.95	Germany 2.500	Malta 0.58	South Africa 7.81
Belgium 52.60	Greece 403.00	Netherlands 2.8650	Spain 215.00
Canada 2.21	Hong Kong 12.66	New Zealand 2.29	Sweden 11.25
Cyprus 0.7055	India 80.16	Norway 2.55	Switzerland 1.41
Denmark 0.81	Japan 107.25	Portugal 257.50	Turkey 168.548
Finland 7.76	Israel 5.51	Saudi Arabia 6.25	USA 1.8420

Supplied by Reuters Bank (including Indian rupee and Israeli shekel).

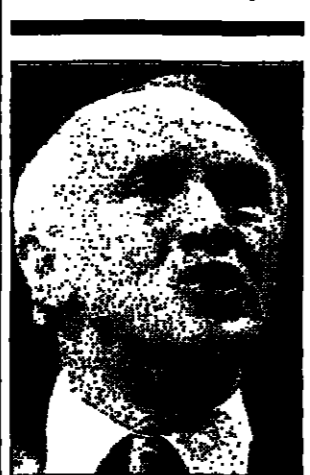
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12 FINANCE AND ECONOMICS

Defence contract row erupts as ITT allies with Racal

Tony May POLITICAL row erupted yesterday over Racal, as the troubled telecommunications group unveiled an alliance with its only rival, ITT of the US...

marked up its shares. They closed at 10 5/8 at 255 1/4 after falling 50p on Monday. Shadow defence secretary David Clark said: "How can defence ministers have so badly mismanaged this vital defence contract?"



How can defence ministers have so badly mismanaged this vital defence contract? David Clark

cause the existing Clansman radios, dating from the 1980s, are "falling to pieces". Racal has spent £35 million so far on the Bowman programme...

Mr Elsbury said: "To win Bowman would be the prize. If we lose Bowman, God forbid, we would still have a sizeable export market, but we would have to downsize the company."



Digging in... Barcom, the specialist plant hire group, yesterday said it was looking to snap up smaller rivals. Managing director Brian Thompson, pictured left with colleague Dave Meadham, unveiled a jump in full year pre-tax profits from \$652,000 to \$2.73 million. PHOTOGRAPH: BEN GURF

Wessex chief swaps insults with Labour on windfall tax

Chris Barrie THE chairman of Wessex Water clashed with a senior Labour MP yesterday over the company's profits and the party's plan for a windfall tax on utilities.

£75.5 million on £128.9 million turnover. The payout to shareholders is up by 14 per cent to 5.7p a share. Mr Dobson accused Wessex of spending £3 million on an unsuccessful bid for South West Water.

Calling Labour's plan for a windfall tax on the utilities "disgraceful", Mr Hood warned that the levy would affect prices. He said Labour was divided over the "fairness, application and good" of the tax.

All at sea over see-saw pound

As sterling fluctuates, exporters are feeling the pinch. Roger Cowe reports on ways companies can protect profits

BANKS are being inundated by companies trying to limit the impact of sterling's dramatic rise. The volatility of the pound is already affecting the profitability of firms which do business abroad.

There is a huge involvement in the currency markets, with the intention of protecting against currency swings by locking in overseas income or costs at known rates. The simplest way of doing this, open to any business which buys or sells abroad, is to take out a forward contract with a bank.

Options allow increased flexibility, although sometimes at greater cost. They overcome the problem that a forward contract may end up at a disadvantage to the spot rate at the time the conversion happens.

Most companies try to match assets and liabilities in the same currency, but many argue that it is wrong to try and protect against losses on translating foreign profits.

Options — paying the bank for an option to buy or sell currency at specified rates and dates. In the options market, the option can only be exercised to hedge.

Advertisement for American Express. Headline: "Still thinking of American Express as a step up?" Sub-headline: "Think again." Text: "Are you stuck at the top of the interest rate ladder, paying as much as 23% APR? Come back down to earth with American Express." Includes an image of an American Express card and contact number 700 767.

Major international groups now take place after this week's mortgage rate rises. "Today we've just seen most of the speculative froth being blown off the pound."

Environment friendly transport call

Roger Cowe THE Confederation of British Industry yesterday called on businesses to cut down the environmental impact of transport by making more use of public transport and technology.

Sterling suffers biggest one-day fall against mark in four years

BRITISH exporters worried sick by sterling's 9 per cent rise against the US dollar and 15 per cent gain against the Deutschmark in the past four months must have shouted for joy yesterday.

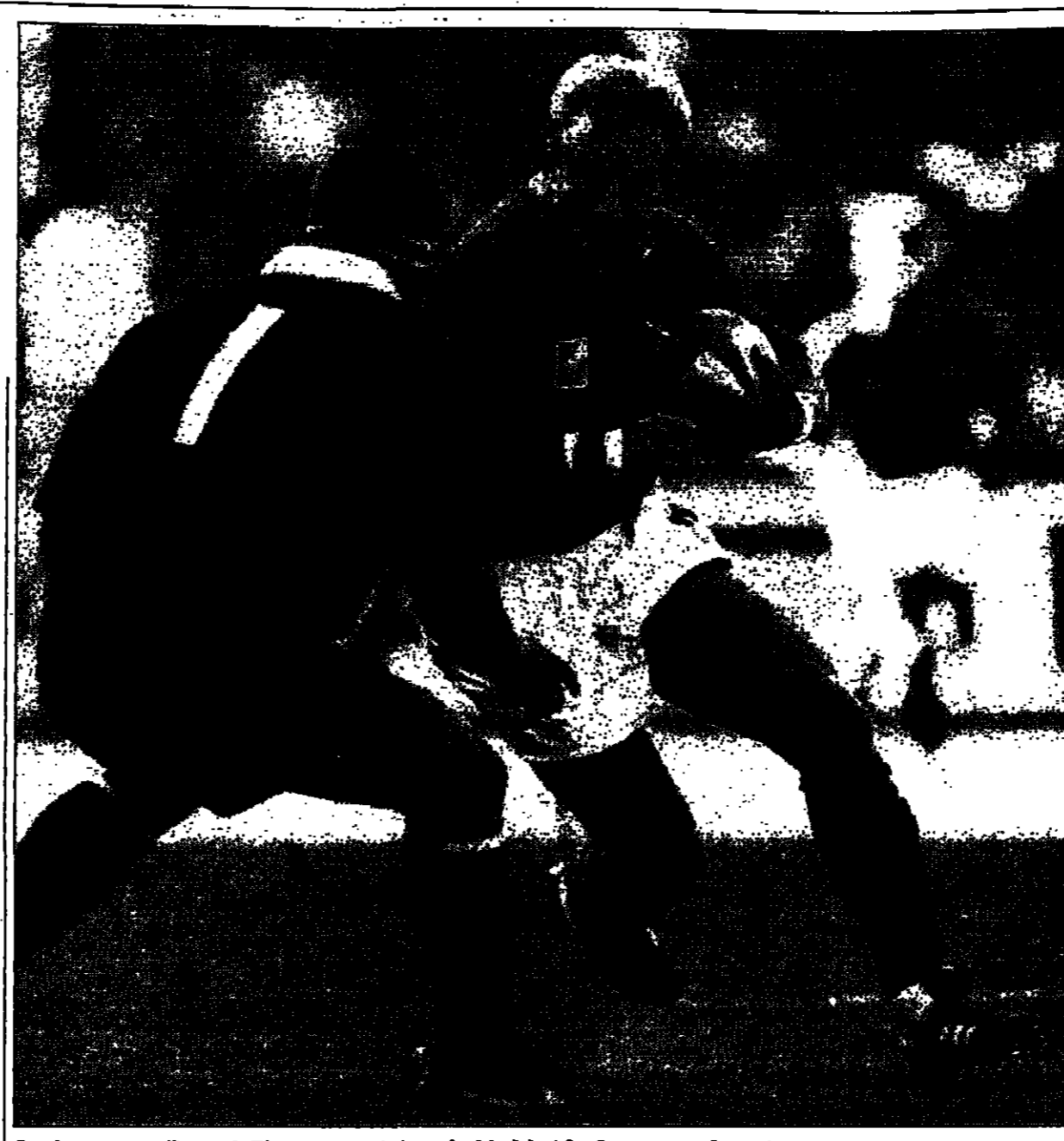
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Partial view of another advertisement on the right margin, mentioning "Rugby Union Pienar says y Sarac" and "Tragedy".

سكا من الامل

Rugby Union Pienaar says yes to Saracens

Robert Armstrong FRANCOIS PIENAAR yesterday became the latest of southern hemisphere players to be captured by an ambitious Courage League One club, Saracens...



Coming soon... Francois Pienaar expects to make his debut for Saracens early next year

Tragedy draws Oxford undergrads closer together

ian Mallin Australian, Ian Tucker. The 23-year-old died of head injuries in October after a tragic incident against Saracens, the first fatality in the first-class game in the modern era...

Catterick with form for the Jackpot races

12.30 Topalgov 1.90 Thunderstruck 12.30 Albarado (imp) 2.30 Pegasus 1.50 Superdog 3.00 Published Handicap

12.50 SLEIGHT OF HAND HANDICAP (20) 21/10/96 £2,500 101 16 TONY TAYLOR (20) 10/10/96...

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2.20 GUILDFORD SELLING HANDICAP (20) £2,500 201 162 FLYING JUSTICE (20) 1/10/96...

2.50 CHARLES WICKERY MEMORIAL HANDICAP (20) £2,500 201 312/11/1 RELIANT (20) 1/10/96...

3.20 STRIKER'S HANDICAP (20) £2,500 1 1/11 THE ONE (20) 1/10/96...

NEWTON ABBOT 1 11/11 SHIPT AARON (20) 1/10/96...

Southwell

1.00 Lancers Armstrong 2.30 Lucky Dollar (nh) 1.50 Pegasus 3.30 Desert Force

1.30 WILLARD REVENUE CHASE (20) £2,500 1 17/11/1 LORSTON COURAGE (20) 1/10/96...

2.30 GREENVILLE CHAIRMAN MEMORIAL HANDICAP (20) £2,500 1 12222 LADY DOLLAN (20) 1/10/96...

3.00 TREASURY HANDICAP (20) £2,500 1 11/11 THE ONE (20) 1/10/96...

Racing It won't be a funny thing at the BHB forum

Chris Hawkins FIRST it was the Jockey Club now it is the British Horseracing Board. The name has changed, the format and personnel have changed but the sniping goes on as ever...

RACELINE 0930 168+ FONTWELL 101 201 102 202 CATTERICK 183 203 SOUTHWELL 184 204

Results NEWCASTLE 12.30 New Lady 1. NERO SAHO, 2. KAVON... FONTWELL 101 201 102 202 CATTERICK 183 203 SOUTHWELL 184 204

Soccer

£10m windfall for Manchester City

Ian Ross

MANCHESTER City, who could hit bottom of the First Division table this weekend, have received the unexpected boost of £10 million to help them buy their way out of their worst crisis in more than a century. Half of that sum ironically comes from Stephen Boler, the multi-millionaire businessman who was an ally of the late Peter Swales, ousted as chairman by Francis Lee in an acrimonious power struggle almost three years ago. Boler has plunged into City shares in a big enough way to make him the club's majority shareholder, but last night he insisted that he had no wish to become chairman or any kind of public figurehead for the club. "Basically all I am is a fan who wants to use his money to help," he said. "Take my word for it, with this money in place and available to improve the playing squad, you will see a dramatic improve-

ment very quickly in the fortunes of Manchester City. Francis Lee has my total support. Whatever people might say to the contrary, I can tell you that he has put a great deal of his personal money into Manchester City; we are talking in millions. The club has wonderful support and I can promise those fans that the vast majority of the cash will be used to bring quality players to Maine Road. Through share redistribution and the purchase of some of City's loan stock, Boler is estimated to have increased his shareholding from 13 per cent to 33 per cent in the past 72 hours. Lee holds 29.9 per cent and Swales's widow Brenda still has 10 per cent. City's other generous benefactor is believed to be another concerned lifelong supporter, John Wardle, one of the men behind the JD sportswear company. At their annual general meeting tomorrow City shareholders are expected to be told that Wardle, like Boler, has agreed to hand over £5 million with no strings at-

tached, for the time being at least. About £2 million of City's windfall is likely to find its way straight to the club's bankers to reduce an overdraft estimated at £15 million, so it is unlikely that the caretaker manager Phil Neal will be sent on a pre-Christmas shopping spree. Lee is more likely to use this windfall to tempt the former Leeds United manager Howard Wilkinson. City made an informal approach to Wilkinson 10 days ago but he declined the offer of employment for lack of assurances about the club's financial status. Neal is expected to be at the helm for the visit of Bradford City on Saturday, but that afternoon may be his last in the job. He seemed almost resigned to his fate after Sunday's comprehensive defeat by Wolverhampton Wanderers, insisting that City were a club in turmoil long before he arrived in early October as assistant to Steve Coppell, who resigned on November 8 after only 33 days in charge.



Not just a City boy... Boler has a Kalahari game sanctuary and a yen to lift the Blues

Why Boler the hunter can afford a white elephant

Ian King and Neil Robinson on Maine Road's conservation-minded sugar-daddy

STEPHEN BOLER's financial firepower puts him comfortably alongside football's leading sugar-daddies. His total wealth is conservatively put at £120 million, ahead of names such as the Everton chairman Peter Johnson, the Middlesbrough chairman Steve Gibson and Rangers' owner David Murray. Last year's BusinessAge's Rich 500 made the 53-year-old Mancunian the 151st wealthiest man in the country. Since then he has become even richer, selling half his stake in Limesight, the kitchens group, for an estimated £60 million. Should anyone wonder why such a successful entrepreneur is bothering to hunt a white elephant like Manchester City, Boler is a man literally fascinated by big game, even owning 300 square miles of South Africa's Kalahari desert where

he runs a sanctuary for black rhino. Of course there have been rumours of major investment in City before, with everyone from the Chester chairman Mark Gutterman to the Gallagher brothers from Oasis about to spring a takeover. But in Boler, City have a man with copper-bottomed financial credentials capable of doing for Maine Road what the late Matthew Harding did for Chelsea. The parallels are clear. Just as Harding, who was Britain's 89th-richest man, traded on his image as archetypal Chelsea supporter, Boler yesterday described himself as "basically a fan who wants to see his money to help Manchester City". Whereas Harding made his fortune in insurance, Boler began his business career by helping found Kwik-Fit, the car-parts com-

pany. He sold his stake for several million pounds in 1976 and proceeded to make another fortune in the furniture business, setting up his Kitchens Direct operation — so called because it sold kitchens through direct responses to newspaper advertisements — in 1982. By 1991 Boler snapped up Dolphin Bathrooms and Sharps Bedrooms, which went to make up Limesight together with Moben, another fitted-kitchens business, and Portland, a conservatories and windows firm bought in 1986. His current stake in the company is worth £17 million. Much of his time recently has gone on his game reserve. It is called Tswala, which translates as "a new beginning" — something City have long sought. However, there are limits to Boler's philanthropy as he is determined that Tswala will one day recoup the money he has invested in it. "I feel I have a moral responsibility to save the black rhino but, if the species is to be protected in

perpetuity, there has to be a commercial element to it," he says. "I have to find a way of making this pay in 50 years' time. I don't want to write a cheque for £14 million and have to keep topping it up each year." In Africa he offsets the money invested in conservation by devoting one third of his land to hunting, encouraging tourists to sport heavily for their pay. "Why deny that we are involved?" he says. "Hunting is a vital commercial reality. For a man who has completely transformed a part of the African landscape, revitalising Manchester City may not prove too daunting.

£20,000 and I'd rather bank the cheque. There is no stronger conservationist than I but I believe that hunting plays a vital commercial role." For a man who has completely transformed a part of the African landscape, revitalising Manchester City may not prove too daunting.

Champions League, Group C Rapid Vienna v Manchester United

United riding Ryan express to beat Rapid

David Lacey in Vienna

MANCHESTER United will put their faith in Ryan Giggs in the Ernst Happel Stadium here tonight while hoping that their trust in Juventus is not misplaced. The stronger the small of roost turkey from Turin, the United's chances of reaching the knockout stage of the European Cup will be. To become the first English team to qualify for the quarter-finals since the tournament was reorganised as a television spectacle, United must get a better result against Rapid Vienna than Fenerbahce achieve in the Stadio delle Alpi. At the moment the Turkish champions are keeping them out of second place by a point. A draw here and a home win in Turin would bring United and Fenerbahce level, with United going through on the strength of their 2-0 victory in Istanbul as opposed to the 1-0 Turkish triumph at Old Trafford. But with Juventus already having won the group, United cannot count on Fenerbahce being beaten. Ferguson seemed to be in a glum mood when United arrived here yesterday. "I can't think about the other game," he insisted. "I'm focusing on what we're doing, inevitably we'll get to know what's happened in Turin but I don't want to hear it."

Having Pallister and Giggs back gives us a fair balance, especially at the back. I think that's important." Rapid can hardly be as poor as they were in losing 2-0 at Old Trafford. Ivanov, the Bulgarian sweeper, can be expected to get at least one decent free-kick on target. They have a defender, Lesiak, suspended but otherwise will field much the same side. Rapid Vienna (probable): Konecny, Vranco, Jovanovic, Schacht, Froschauer, Herzig, Zinger, Ratschky, Kucharski, Wagner, Bogner. Manchester United (probable): Schmeichel, Neville, May, Pallister, Irwin, Beckham, Butt, Keane, Giggs, Cantona, Solskjaer. Referee: L. Sondal (Swe).

Group A: Auxerre v Rangers

Rangers and nervousness bar French path to glory

Patrick Glenn in Auxerre

THE normal combativeness of the Champions League may be hard to find at the Abbe Deschamps Stadium tonight, when a French team who do not have to win enter Scottish opponents indifferent about the result. It is a prospect causing anxiety in League Roux, the 58-year-old coach who has moulded Auxerre into improbable champions of France after 56 years. Roux's team need only a draw with Rangers to reach the last eight of the European Cup. Even if Ajax also draw in Switzerland against Grasshopper Zurich, Auxerre will qualify by virtue of their superior goal-power in beating Ajax 2-1 last month after losing to the Dutch champions 1-0 in September. Auxerre's own edginess may be a bigger problem than Rangers. Roux was understandably guarded yesterday when discussing the possibilities. "We know a draw is enough," he said, "but it makes us unsure of how to ap-

proach the game. Rangers have to prove to people they are not as poor a team as their defeats in the first four Champions League games suggest." The Rangers manager Walter Smith admitted that the £500,000 win bonus was one incentive, but he said: "There are others. We have our good form to maintain as we have some vital fixtures coming up in the league. There are players coming into the team and they'll want to show they should stay there." It may come down to survival of the fittest. Auxerre have been seriously hit by injuries and Rangers are also without the suspended Paul Gascoigne. Roux yesterday lost his captain, the midfielder Lamouchi, to injury but he was persuaded by the return to the defence of Silvestre and to the attack of Laslandes. Smith too has a slight doubt about his captain Richard Gough, recovering from a knock against Arsenal but he has been seriously hit by injuries and Rangers are also without the suspended Paul Gascoigne. Roux yesterday lost his captain, the midfielder Lamouchi, to injury but he was persuaded by the return to the defence of Silvestre and to the attack of Laslandes. Smith too has a slight doubt about his captain Richard Gough, recovering from a knock against Arsenal but he has been seriously hit by injuries and Rangers are also without the suspended Paul Gascoigne.

Rovers renew Eriksson chase

Ian Ross

BLACKBURN ROVERS hope to announce Sven Eriksson as their manager before Christmas. Only a week after the Swede said he had no intention of resigning as Sampdoria coach to move to Wood Park, he has reopened negotiations with Blackburn — indeed, he is rumoured to have visited England this week to discuss personal terms with the Blackburn chairman Robert Carr. Eriksson is in the last few months of a six-year contract with the Italian club, which he is not seeking to renew. Newcastle have sent the FA a video of Saturday's 2-1 win over Newcastle and confirmed that they want the referee Graham Barber to review his sending-off of their captain Tony Adams after his challenge on Alan Shearer. Steve Coppell, who resigned as Manchester City's manager after 33 days, has returned to Crystal Palace in a part-time capacity, mainly involving scouting. Northern Ireland's World

Premiership: Middlesbrough 0, Leicester City 2 Samba silent as Boro slip up again

George Caulkin
THE Brazilian beach to which Bryan Robson threatens to banish the errant Emerson for the rest of his playing days must have looked mighty inviting to his shell-shocked Middlesbrough team last night. Buffeted by wind, rain and a brace of Leicester goals against the run of play, their wait for a Premiership victory now stretches almost to three months. Summer's optimism is but a hazy memory. For the first time in a testing season, Robson fielded a team without a South American in its ranks. With Emerson awol, Branco long departed and Juninho injured there was an inevitable air of

absent friends hanging over proceedings. Half a dozen first-team stalwarts were also unavailable and it was left to a largely home-grown bunch to provide the magic and muscle capable of arresting a winless league run of nine games. Phil Stamp frequently pushed up to augment his forwards and Ravanelli gave him an early chance to open the scoring, but a clumsy finish to the Italian's delightful flick left much to be desired. Both teams' demeanour reflected their precarious habit near the foot of the table; even for early December this was the stuff of relegation cliché. Clearances were scrambled, tackles were X-rated and shots snatched. Most of the latter came

from Middlesbrough, who with cooler heads could have established a significant advantage. A sweeping one-touch movement involving Fleming, Ravanelli and an intelligent through-header from Stamp demanded just that, but Hignett buried his shot blindly into Keller's midriff. City's United States international keeper dealt equally nonchalantly with a long-range Ravanelli free-kick, but had to make a more urgent intervention from the boot of the excellent Stamp, whose shot from distance flashed through a thicket of defenders. Keller, with precious little time to react, made an excellent low save. It was against this wave of sustained home pressure that Leicester, typically, took the

lead. Fine work from Lennon brought a juicy cross that left the unmarked Steve Claridge the simple task of nodding into goal. If that left the home crowd bemused, the second blow that followed moments after the resumption provoked mere silence. Parker spurned the penalty area with a short, square free-kick that found Muszyk level in acres of space, and the City wing-back reacted with alacrity with a blistering drive from all of 25 yards. Walsh barely moved as it fizzed past him. Middlesbrough: Walsh, Cox, Whyte, Moore (Barnes), Strain, Fleming, Mustoe, Beck, Stamp, Hignett, Ravanelli, Scott, Shearer. Leicester: Keller, Grayson, Prior, Watts, Marshall, Lizzet, Lennon, Taylor, Lawrence, (S), Parker, Claridge, Nayler (Campbell), (S). Referee: P. Alcock (Redhill).

Results

Table with soccer results including UEFA Cup, FA Carling Premiership, and Nationwide League. Columns include team names, scores, and match details.

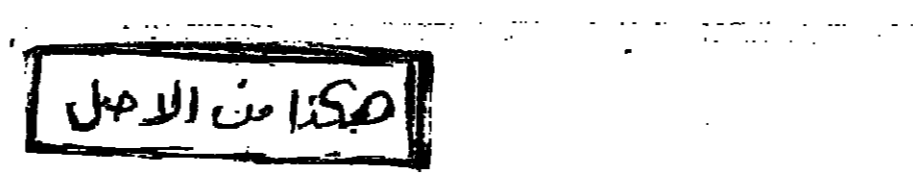
Table with soccer results including Second Division, Third Division, and various cup competitions. Columns include team names, scores, and match details.

Table with soccer results including American Football, Basketball, and other sports. Columns include team names, scores, and match details.

Table with soccer results including European Cup, Premiership, and other sports. Columns include team names, scores, and match details.

Table with sports news including Swimming, Motor Racing, Cricket, and other sports. Columns include event names, participants, and brief descriptions.

Team talk: The independent news and reports service. 0891 33 77+. Includes a list of sports teams and their current positions.





Cashing in... Henman on his way to victory

Tennis

Stephen Bierley in Munich sees the British No. 1 earn more than he did in all 1995 by beating Michael Stich in the Grand Slam Cup

Henman strikes it rich and quick

THE pavements here, or the floor of the Olympiastadion, are truly paved with gold. Barely 24 hours after stepping off a plane from London...

On the face of it a tournament which pays out total prize-money of \$6 million ought to be too attractive for anyone to miss. Instead the Grand Slam Cup lends credibility to the adage that money cannot buy you everything.

Next week Krajicek enters hospital for a knee operation. Here, thanks to the \$250,000 bonus paid to winners of the Australian Open, Roland Garros, Wimbledon or Flushing Meadows, he picked up \$350,000 for 46 minutes of play...

The British No. 1, who had not played since winning his home title at Telford last month, practised for 90 minutes with Jim Courier on Monday and was understandably delighted that he had hit the ball so well yesterday.

Stich, when he loses, is given to blaming everybody and everything other than himself. On this occasion there were no real excuses, although his injured right shoulder is not 100 per cent.

There were few signs of the German lifting his game after a defeat from a couple of mighty forehands. So, when Henman broke him again midway through the second set, the result was inevitable.

CRICKET

Tour matches: Mashonaland v England XI

England brought low by the vicar's son from Sussex

David Hoppe in Harare

AMONG the many innovations that David Lloyd has introduced to rejuvenate English cricket are dressing-room maxims, Churchill speeches and fitness camps, to mention but three...

Atherton and Hussain in his first three overs, and again to 94 for seven before Robert Croft's unbeaten 66 displayed overdue resourcefulness.

Thorpe had refused a third, left the top four with 11 runs between them, and the loss of Crawley, after Croft had shunned a tight single into the off side, added to the sense of waste.

England's latest setback came at the hands of James Kirtley, son of a Sussex vicar, and the fact that he was from today after another humbling experience at the start of the Zimbabwe tour.

England's most optimistic moments he imagined that his proximity to England might be worth a spot of net bowling, a learning session in the bar, and the chance to relax in the sun and watch some Test cricket.

He was dropped at extra cover for Kirtley's shot instead took him to his half-century — but he rounded off matters with England's only flourish, striking 14 off four balls from Brian Strang, including a straight six, before he marched from the field at the first inkling of bad light.

England had reasonably banded together for their defeat in a one-day match against a President's XI on the same ground on Sunday, but with only two four-day matches before the first Test they can no longer take refuge in that excuse.

The Kookaburra ball swung for the first hour on a humid morning and both Stewart, against the left-arm Brian Strang, and Hussain dragged balls on to their stumps when they were seeking to play no shot. England had aggravated their problems with two run-outs; Knight's departure,

leaving them on 94 for five, and Michael Vaughan responded to his demotion to No. 6 with three fours which left 24 more runs needed off the last two overs.



Harare horror... Alec Stewart plays on to his stumps after scoring a solitary single

Australia v West Indies: second Test

Ninety per cent Warne plenty good enough

Mike Selvey in Sydney

DURING lunch at the SCG the electronic scoreboard ran an advertisement of Shane Warne, Nike star-stud gleaming, sending down a fizzer that turned into a buzz-saw and cut through bat, stumps, the lot.

That split second took the fight out of West Indies. After an interval of contemplation, the emphasis shifted from trying to win to trying not to lose and Hooper, who had played so beautifully when Chanderpaul was there, went into his shell.

Not 10 minutes previously, Warne had produced such a slip-sporing rabbit from the hat that West Indies, at that point well placed not just to save this Test but even to win it, simply curled up and died to go 2-0 down in the series.

Replays proved inconclusive. "Most definitely a catch," said Taylor, who had been at first slip. "I saw it into his gloves." "No comment," smiled Walsh. But Lara handled the situation excellently, leaving without fuss.

Except, that is, for the pair who came between those two collapses. Chanderpaul and Carl Hooper, who in 23 sublime overs together added 117 for the fourth wicket and made batting look ridiculously easy for the only time in this match, even temporarily seeing Warne off.

Chanderpaul, nimble-footed and quick of stroke, made 71 from only 68 deliveries, reaching his half-century from only 38 of them, while the new, responsible Hooper creased his way to 47. It was glorious counter-attack and, Taylor admitted, it had him worried.

What price genius, though? Warne's nine-over spell first thing had cost him 52 runs, 38 coming from the first 27 overs as Chanderpaul's twinkling feet got to the ball on the full. Significantly, though, Warne had taken one of the three early wickets, bowling the left-hander Robert Samuels with one that pitched wide in the rough outside off stump and hit middle. This was the old Warne returning, or at least, in his captain's estimation, 90 per cent of him.

But the tide turned and, with only 188 required from the last four hours, Chander-

Australian Capital Territory v England A

Slow pitch finally frustrates Holloake

Andy Wilson in Canberra

ENGLAND A ended the least instructive and most frustrating section of their tour to date with a disappointing draw, because of a slow pitch which disguised the limitations of the home team.

from four balls before pulling the first ball of the second over to midwicket with the score on 12. Craig White came in next but went in similar fashion two overs later.

leaving them on 94 for five, and Michael Vaughan responded to his demotion to No. 6 with three fours which left 24 more runs needed off the last two overs.

Lawrence 'fitter than ever' and hoping to return

THE former England fast bowler David Lawrence is hoping to make a surprise comeback, two years after giving up all hope of recovering from splitting his kneecap so dramatically in a Test in New Zealand in February 1992.

serious: it is something I have got to do for myself." The Sussex chairman Alan Caffyn has hit back at criticism of the county's abrupt dismissal of Ed Giddins only two days after the TCCB banned the fast bowler for 19 months over a cocaine-positive test.

was good reason. The 'drug' incident was just one factor and not the sole reason, as the press would have you believe. I am not, however, prepared to go into details.

Motor Racing

Mansell considers comeback with Jordan

Sean Henry

MICHEL MANSSELL has responded to a request for help on Monday and it showed the second Jordan-Peugeot seat as one of six vacancies yet to be filled in the 24-car field.

In 1995 — would go a long way towards easing Eddie Jordan's disappointment at failing to secure Damon Hill's services for 1997.

Jordan are under pressure from Peugeot, their engine supplier, to improve their results and could lose those engines to an all-French team headed by Alain Prost in 1999.

Squash

Harris shocked by Gregory's gall

Richard Jago in Bombay

PAUL GREGORY recovered from within three points of defeat and overcame some quirky refereeing yesterday to usurp the seedings and earn a quarter-final with the favourite, Rodney Eyles.

12-15, 15-13, 15-8 win in the \$65,000 Mahindra International after almost an hour and a half will have guaranteed him one of his biggest pay-days.

Advertisement for DuckCity CD-ROM. Includes a cartoon illustration of a duck and a child, and text: 'DuckCity by Alan Sauer', 'I like to use A.T.H.', 'All Terrain Duck - a positive contribution to child preoccupation', 'PC/MAC CD-ROM/R.R.P £14.99/OUT NOW', 'visit me at www.duckcity.com', 'BMG Interactive'.

Handwritten signature or note at the bottom of the page.

Saracens capture Springbok star, page 13
Manchester City's £10m windfall, page 14

Henman storms to megabuck victory, page 15
England embarrassed by Mashonaland, page 15

SportsGuardian

SOCCER

Uefa Cup, third round, second leg: Newcastle United 2, FC Metz 0 (agg: 3-1)

Asprilla's perfect double

Michael Walker

JUST as Newcastle United were contemplating their first goalless draw for nearly 2½ years, Faustino Asprilla, the man who cannot score in domestic football but revels on the European nights, snatched two late goals at St James' Park.

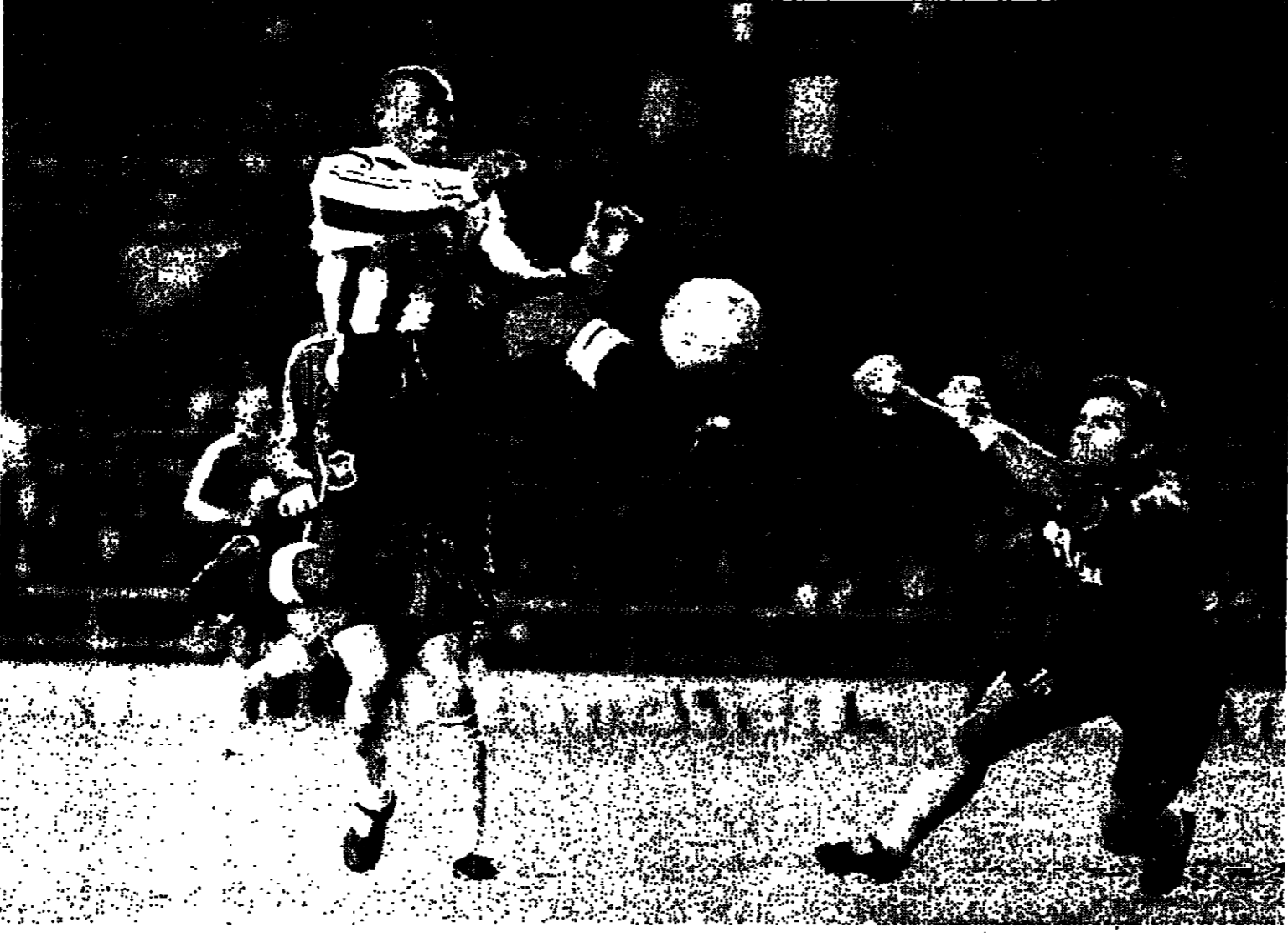
A stooping 81st-minute header was followed 60 seconds later by a flick over the advancing Metz goalkeeper and, though both goals were against the run of play, they guarantee Newcastle a place in the quarter-final draw on Friday week.

It is never straightforward with Asprilla, though, and, having been booked for excessive celebration after his opener, the Colombian will be suspended for whomsoever Newcastle meet then.

It had been a long time coming for Newcastle but, when Peacock chested down Gillespie's centre and knocked the ball back across goal, Asprilla nodded home from four yards. His second, a nonchalant flick after a daring run, sealed the result but the scoreline flattered Newcastle. Their performance was as unconvincing as any of late.

A calendar month and five games had passed without Newcastle experiencing victory but Keegan persisted with his now familiar line-up. In fact it was Metz who made changes, with Isias, the man who felled Batty, as expected on the bench. Metz also had a different keeper from the first leg, Biancarelli, a 26-year-old Corsican who had played only 10 times for the club.

In a nervous opening from the home side it was almost a quarter of an hour before Biancarelli had to make a serious intervention. For the first 10 minutes the men in rouge, just as Ferencvaros had been in the previous round, were the livelier.



One that got away... Asprilla looks impressive in the face of Metz's goalkeeper Biancarelli but this chance came to nothing. PHOTOGRAPH: MICHAEL STEELE

Elliott was twice exposed early on, by the speed of Pires, then Traore; and, once, Blanchard had shown clean soles to Beardley, the Frenchman was able to run 60 yards unchallenged before bringing a back-peddling tip-

over save out of Srnicek. It was not the kind of attacking to cause panic, though neither were Newcastle offering more than glimpses of danger themselves. A curling Gillespie centre just eluded the dive of

Shearer and a driven Gillespie shot was hacked off the line by Kastendeuch. Speculative shots from Lee and Givola followed but the visitors' swift, incisive break-aways continued to carry the greater promise of a goal. In

the 36th minute one should have arrived. Once again Pires found space behind Elliott and, when his cross swept in from the byline, Albert missed his kick; the ball bounced perfectly towards Lang but he put his header over from six yards.

A stinging 30-yard thunderbolt from Pires was then parried over by Srnicek, who wisely did not try to catch it.

At least the half was to end on a comparatively bright note for Newcastle with a typically hungry smash-and-grab tackle and blast from Shearer. And, when Asprilla sped by Terrier after the interval, it seemed the Colombian had caught the mood.

However, any optimism caused by that little flurry of activity dissolved abruptly. In the next minute Lee's slack pass from outside his own area went directly to Pires, who in a flash had exchanged a one-two with Traore and was bearing down on Srnicek. Having apparently steadied

himself, though, and with 35,000 mouths agape, Pires swung his shot into the side-netting.

When, 15 minutes later, Blanchard ran on to another cross through-ball, only to go down as Albert cut across, the crowd was to suffer another heart-stopping moment. The referee raised his arm but, when he pointed, it was to the six-yard box not the penalty spot.

"It is about time because it's the truth," he says. "I wanted as well to be fair to the ordinary copper on the ground who was let down by lack of leadership on the day. Some might feel, on seeing it, I was being a bit too kind. But I was desperate not to let the South Yorkshire force have the excuse that I was just being anti-police in order to dismiss the film."

Drama-documentary is a contentious genre, one which has been compromised by flawed offerings such as In The Name Of The Father. As it

Hillsborough, the essential TV drama



Jim White

IT WON'T be easy, the scenes of anguish are relentless, but every football fan should watch Hillsborough, Jimmy McGovern's television examination of the worst tragedy in British sporting history which is screened tomorrow night. If only to realise, were it not for the intervention of chance, it could have been you.

The events covered by the film are, according to the Chief Constable of South Yorkshire, too recent to be a fit subject for dramatic examination. When his force was approached for help early in the work's research, he protested that such a project might upset the families of the victims. Which, it might be thought, was a bit of a first in South Yorkshire police's attitude to the disaster: worrying about the families' sensibilities rather than their own backs.

In fact, the film came about only because the Hillsborough Families' Support Group approached McGovern specifically to write up their story. They met after a special screening of an episode of the writer's Cracker, the one about Albie, the skinhead driven to serial murder by what he saw at Hillsborough.

"I was worried that some of them might be upset by a fictional depiction of their trauma in Cracker," McGovern says. "So we arranged for them to see it. Afterwards a couple of them said they actually identified with Albie's rage. I have never seen so much anger in people's eyes."

The families agreed with McGovern that, far from being too early, it was about time their side of things was given an airing.

"It is about time because it's the truth," he says. "I wanted as well to be fair to the ordinary copper on the ground who was let down by lack of leadership on the day. Some might feel, on seeing it, I was being a bit too kind. But I was desperate not to let the South Yorkshire force have the excuse that I was just being anti-police in order to dismiss the film."

Drama-documentary is a contentious genre, one which has been compromised by flawed offerings such as In The Name Of The Father. As it

spins its tale of blunder, stupidity and confusion, however, Hillsborough seems all too plausible.

"The police were so bloody incompetent there was no need for us to exaggerate for dramatic effect," says McGovern. "The bald facts are enough. If anything we toned it down, because nobody would believe some of the things that went on."

The families' preoccupations in the seven years since the disaster have been twofold: to ensure such a thing could never happen again, and to seek justice.

In the first they have manifestly succeeded. The events of the film happened within the lifetime of an infant-school child but it seems like another world. Anyone who went to matches back then will remember the crushes depicted in it: the shoves, the fences, the rickety terraces, the overcrowding. Also, whenever something went wrong, the attitude of those in control that, since you are a football fan and thus solely in attendance to cause trouble, you must be to blame.

It really is not like that any more, and it is only when you go to an antediluvian stadium such as Oxford United's condemned Manor Ground, with its funnel-like exits and hopeless access, that you appreciate how much things have changed. That it took a disaster of the scale of Hillsborough to facilitate change is the real tragedy within McGovern's film.

The families' quest for justice is a different matter. The catalogue of clumsy error McGovern discovered in his researches - the way video surveillance evidence was ignored, the fact that vital tapes went missing, the manner in which crucial witnesses were not called to the witness box - suggests that the jury at the Hillsborough disaster inquest may not have been in full possession of the facts when it delivered a verdict of accidental death.

SADLY, you feel that the interests involved are too strong to allow a single television programme the clout to reopen the case. But McGovern felt obliged to try.

"I think it is clear from the film who we reckon was to blame for the disaster," he says. "We know what happened; if anyone thinks any of it is untruthful, then let them sue me."

And you get the feeling, from his tone of voice, that he would rather enjoy that. Hillsborough will be shown on ITV tomorrow at 8pm with the concluding part at 10.40pm.

GOLD

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Guardian Crossword No 20,827
Set by Janus

Across

- Vile wretch perpetrating crimes on worker (5)
- Withdrawn by a retreating donkey (5)
- Is it the usual custom among doctors? (7,8)
- Spoken end piece to story (4)
- North African attraction rejected by naval officers (8)
- God in Oriental grave (5)
- Settles on last plot in headland (5)
- Public green with nothing on it (5)
- The height of exaltation (9)
- Arose from Egyptian leader flouting mandate (5)
- Flower-party backing queen (4)
- Unforgettable ghostly air? (8,7)

Down

- Belonging to those people of South Eire (5)
- Obstacle for a rustic crane-operator (9)
- Child said to have power (5)
- Unique model garment (7)
- In another area it might be uncommon (4)
- Confederate of General Lysander (4)
- Over there, Dante is doomed (10)
- Mishap a novice made a note of? (10)
- Threatening to find one in moonshot by America (7)
- Odd forenames for a fraternity member (9)
- Professional right about Thespian's muscle (10)
- A golfer's watering hole (10)

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